STAGE-COACH ENTERPRISES IN VAN DIEMEN'S LAND AND TASMANIA

by

Steven Walker, BA (Hons), Grad Cert Management, Grad Cert Cultural Heritage, Grad Dip Strategic Studies, Master of Defence Studies, MA

A thesis submitted as part of the requirements for
Doctor of Philosophy in Humanities
School of History and Classics
University of Tasmania
January 2016

CERTIFICATES

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information and duly acknowledged in the thesis, and to the best of my knowledge and belief no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgment is made in the text of the thesis, nor does the thesis contain any material that infringes copyright.

Steven Walker

STEVEN WALKER

Date: 30 January 2016

STATEMENT OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

The research associated with this thesis abides by the international and Australian codes on human and animal experimentation, the guidelines of the Australian Government's Office of Gene Technology Regulator, and rulings of the Safety, Ethics and Institutional Biosafety Committees of the University.

Steven Walker

STEVEN WALKER

Date: 30 January 2016

AUTHORITY OF ACCESS

Two years after submission, this thesis may be made available for loan and limited copying and communication in accordance with the Copyright Act 1968.

Steven Walker

STEVEN WALKER

Date: 30 January 2016

ABSTRACT

From 1820, increased settler movement into Van Diemen's Land prompted the need for improved communications; but small population numbers and high commercial risk factors discouraged the establishment of inland passenger transport enterprises. After 1830, population growth near the two main towns, and the colonial Post Office's evolving inland communications route structure, encouraged transport infrastructure and stage-coach enterprise development, as physical and financial security became more assured.

The financially constrained colonial government, transitioning from penal, through self-governing colony to federation, was reluctant to operate businesses where private enterprise might provide the means. Instead, where possible, it subsidised construction, contracted for services, devolved responsibility to local communities, and enacted a comprehensive body of legislation to achieve these ends.

Government and stage-coach enterprises alike faced commercial uncertainty caused by economic depressions, the high cost of capital, a reduction in wages, and from outflows of free citizens. Adjustment was necessary following the introduction of steam-powered ferries, the electric telegraph and the railways; population growth was slow and only the opening of new mines increased the potential passenger transport market.

The skills required by managers within a convict/free settler society in the face of such economic, financial, legal, social, and workforce uncertainty and complexity were considerable. Yet settlers with capital were primarily interested in land acquisition, and not in service industries. Therefore, stage-coach entrepreneurs were drawn from a free-settler, lower socio-economic group, or from convict expirees with limited business skills, and insolvency was a constant risk. Monopoly of both the route and the logistic support chain was a perceived means towards viability, but was unpopular with government and the press.

The large numbers of confident and energetic, yet ordinary, men and women within the stage-coach enterprises, served their communities, and made a considerable contribution to the island's social development, inclusion and capital, and to its economy; yet they are historiographically unnoticed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank museum staff, librarians and archivists in Tasmania, Sydney and the United Kingdom for their courtesy and help, which always exceeded the requirements of mere professionalism; also, the staff of the Graduate Research Office at the University of Tasmania for their advice, support and provision of skills training.

In particular, I must acknowledge the humour, sense of proportion and constructive feedback of my supervisors, Dr Mike Powell and Dr Tom Dunning, which made my candidacy an enjoyable and positive experience. I would also like to thank Dr Dunning for his personal assistance during his time as Head of School.

Lastly, my wife Lynn endured three and a half years of PhD hermitage punctuated by my focused topic of conversation at the end of each day. I do appreciate her consideration and forbearance, and value her different perspectives.

CONTENTS

PART 3: TRANSITIONS

LIST OF FIGURES

STAGE-COACH ENTERPRISES IN VAN DIEMEN'S LAND AND TASMANIA

INTRODUCTION

I live in a c1833, coaching inn in the midlands of Tasmania. Throughout the seven years which I spent restoring the property, I admired the quality of its materials and construction, and wondered at the determination and organisation which, for example, enabled cedar to be logged in New South Wales (NSW), from whence it was floated, dragged or carted to the coast to be shipped to Van Diemen's Land (VDL). On arrival, it was carted to its destination to be crafted and used; and all this less than 30 years after the first white settlement on the island.

As an archaeologist and ancient historian specialised in the Roman and pre-Roman iron age in North Britain I might seem ill-suited to answer such Tasmanian questions; but, from my inn beside the main road, the parallels of empires, establishing colonies on hostile shores at the edge of the known world, overcoming the constraints and difficulties discussed in Geoffrey Blainey's *Tyranny of Distance*,[1] using iron implements and wheeled transport, driven by animal, wind or water power, and building in stone, brick and wood, now seem clear. Although the settings were 1400 years apart, the available technology and logistic capability were the same.

Also, as the holder of an Airline Transport Pilot's Licence, I have some understanding of the practical difficulties which confronted the operators of colonial stage-coach enterprises, the commercial considerations affecting the passenger transport industry, and the legislative framework which regulated safe transport operations. Considerations for the loading of a stage-coach were remarkably similar to those of a modern light passenger aeroplane, and competition on the road resembled the situation in today's domestic airline market.

Tasmanian colonisation and development was a tale of national, commercial and self-interest, joined-up government, leadership, systems, capability, change, communication and organisation, and the management of expectations and priorities.

---

[1] Geoffrey Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance shaped Australia's History* (Melbourne, 1982).

Thesis Statement

This thesis will therefore examine the economic and social impacts of, and upon, VDL/Tasmanian horse-drawn stage-coach enterprises, from around 1826 to about 1920.

Context

An initial research consideration was where the topic sat within academic disciplines. Legal, economic or social histories were possible options, but studies in management, business, logistics and tourism offered themselves as modern alternatives. The subject primarily concerns business enterprises for which, theoretically, a modern framework could apply. However, most modern management tools are themselves distillations of observed best practice, and therefore the product of historical studies and experience.

Situating the business environment with respect to its period risked anachronism, therefore the terminology used throughout the thesis has been drawn from accounts of the time. Thus, although the term 'enterprise' (as in small to medium enterprises [SMEs]) seems quite familiar to modern readers, it was the term used throughout the colonial period to describe stage-coach businesses. Similarly, governance and management concepts, principles and terminology in colonial VDL and Tasmania were almost indistinguishable from modern usage.

In period, the enterprises might be summarised as pre-industrial, Georgian transport technology lingering into a Victorian industrialised age; but comparatively, in location and scale and over time, VDL communications and societal systems, and infrastructure and industry were underdeveloped and somewhat lagged behind the English 'transport revolution'.[2]

People and interests (national, colony, societal, and individual) were the main factors affecting the enterprises and the determinants of priorities; the economy and logistics were the main constraints. Thus the key research questions were:

What was the applicable regulatory framework?

How did the colonial economy affect the enterprises?

---

[2] Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century* (Berkeley, 1986), p. 7.

What business structure best suited a colonial stage-coach enterprise?

Who were the stage-coach entrepreneurs, their associates and workers?

The question apparently missing from the above is what was a stage-coach. The answer is contained in the first question and, for now, any reader's existing concept of a stage-coach vehicle will suffice; but the definition will be found in Chapter 2.

Some other terms used throughout the thesis require definition:

'Governance' – is the office, function or power of governing, along with its method of management and system of regulations.

'Joined-up government' – requires communication and coordination of purpose and effort upwards and downwards through all levels of government and the bureaucracy, and laterally across all necessary agencies to deliver the corporate outcome.

The difference between travel and tourism also requires clarification. In stating that the two were not the same, Marian Walker summarised tourism as 'a human activity … best treated as a "system"', and went on to say that 'Tourism … is much more than the travel industry. Tourism is the big picture: a phenomenon that … includes the travel industry'.[3] My thesis will propose a somewhat apposite relationship: stage-coach enterprises were a subset of the broader transport industry, for whose services tourism and the passenger travel industry were customers.

Perceptions of stage-coaches and coaching have situated the subject and affected its historiography. Although stage-coaches provided essential transport services, the process behind those services seemed to be assumed. From an academic historian's perspective, stage-coaching was not a matter warranting serious interest. Consequently the subject fell under the purview of the enthusiastic amateur, which further diminished its credibility and weakened its image.

Literature Review

In what he described as the 'romantic school' of literature concerning English coaching histories, Professor Alan Everitt referred to 'the kind of works that

[3] Marian Walker, *Memories, Dreams and Inventions: The Evolution of Tasmania's Tourism Image, 1803-1939* (University of Tasmania, PhD thesis, 2008), pp. 23-24.

sometimes contain useful facts buried in a farrago of Pickwickian nonsense'.[4] Everitt's statement is broad, mischievous yet accurate; however, the larger slur on *Pickwick* is unsound.

Everitt presumably had works such as Malet's *Annals*[5] in mind, when referring to the buried, useful facts, which for the researcher would require a large effort for multiple, small rewards and present a data compilation, organisation and storage challenge. With regard to *Pickwick*, Everitt's harsh assessment effectively acknowledged that in the absence of any dedicated primary sources, novels of the period provided the best descriptions of coaching conditions and the associated use of the inns; hence the apparent invisibility of the process behind stage-coach services.

Jane Eyre travelled to take up her post as governess by coordinated coach and conveyance, and fled Thornfield Hall by hailing a coach on the road.[6] Nicholas Nickleby travelled by stage-coach from London to Yorkshire with his new employer and boys returning to Dotheboys boarding school.[7] The service was incidental. Only Tom Brown provided a full description of the stage-coach process including coachmen, guards, ostlers, innkeepers, passengers, other travellers on the road, use of the horn, changing horses at the staging points, collection of passengers at other points and the provision of food and drink.[8]

The serials of Dickens' *Pickwick Papers* were imported to VDL as they were published. Indeed, ships' captains arriving in Hobart Town sent advance notice that such were on board even before landing. Henry Dowling issued a pirated version in Launceston in 1838, which he claimed to be the largest work published thus far in the two Australian colonies,[9] but no similar fictional account of coaching in VDL was penned. In situating stage-coaching in VDL, *Pickwick* informed the local populace, entertained an emerging, middle-class readership and produced a certain nostalgia for 'home'. Everitt's 'Pickwickian nonsense' slur undervalued Dickens' novels from a

---

[4] A. Everitt, *Perspectives in English Urban History* (London, 1973), p. 245.
[5] Harold Esdaile Malet and Nimrod, *Annals of the road : or, notes on mail and stage coaching in Great Britain* (London, 1876), passim.
[6] Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre* (London, 1987), p. 68 and p. 227.
[7] Charles Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby* (London, 1991), pp. 67-74.
[8] Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (Harmondsworth, 1971), pp. 63-76.
[9] Publisher's Preface, in Charles Dickens, *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club, with illustrations, after Phiz* (Launceston, Van Diemen's Land, 1838).

contextualising, social development sense, but had some validity for other works which emphasised romantic, nostalgic spectacle, or were technically focused.

Even in Britain, dedicated coaching histories are rare. The most recent coach history, Wilkinson's *Royal Mail Coaches*, was confined to mail coaches and written by an author whose primary interest was in the weapons carried by the guards, subsequently broadened to the mail coaching system.[10] Consequently, although comprehensive, it was technically rather than socially focused, and drew upon Brian Austen's London School of Economics PhD thesis,[11] which is perhaps the only business assessment of coaching enterprises. However, Austen's work was also confined to the mail coach system, which was instructive for the broader stage-coach industry, but neither of the works placed mail or stage-coach enterprises in a social context.

Likewise, there is no dedicated, primary or secondary, stage-coach history of VDL. Instead, coaching stories were incidental inclusions in broader travel records and the story telling of Everitt's 'romantic school' permeates the secondary writings. There is a body of local historian work, which contains no citations. Fact books, such as Moore-Robinson's *Historical Brevities*[12] contain few citations, but became accepted sources for such as George Hawley Stancombe, whose *Highway in Van Diemen's Land*[13] contains more VDL/Tasmanian stage-coach information than any other secondary publication. However, at least with regard to stage-coaches, it is frequently unsound, yet was accepted by Lloyd Robson for the very small mention of stage-coaches in his *History of Tasmania*.[14]

While Fagan and Harrison's *The Stage Coach: a Journey through Tasmania*[15] has a promising title, it too is a fact book compendium, in which there is no stage-coach section, although there is one for the *Pickwick Papers*! The cover and title are

---

[10] Frederick Wilkinson, *Royal Mail Coaches: an illustrated history* (Stroud, 2007), p. 9.
[11] Brian Austen, *British mail-coach services, 1784-1850* (New York, 1986).
[12] J. Moore-Robinson and Tasmanian Government Tourist Bureau, *Historical Brevities of Tasmania* (Hobart, 1937).
[13] George Hawley Stancombe, *Highway in Van Diemen's Land* (Glendessary, Tas, 1968).
[14] L.L. Robson, *A History of Tasmania. Volume I., Van Diemen's Land from the earliest times to 1855* (Melbourne, 1983).
[15] R.F. Fagan and J.N.D. Harrison, *The stage coach: a journey through Tasmania* (Hobart, 1964).

examples of the nostalgia evoked by stage-coaches being used as a marketing ploy. Furthermore, although Launceston became a stage-coach terminus, hub and base for several enterprises, John Reynolds' *Launceston* made no reference other than to describe 'Johnny' Fawkner as a hotel keeper and coach operator, and to mention the *Comet* coach in the background of a public meeting.[16] In this case, stage-coaching literally was a background activity.

Similarly, VDL stage-coaching features little in a broader Australian context. In his recent book, *Transport: an Australian History*, Robert Lee made almost no mention of stage-coaches in Tasmania, other than to state that a true stage-coach system on the English lines was not introduced until 1819, and that the road from Hobart to Launceston was one of the only two decent roads in Australia at the time.[17] His source seemed to be Sam Everingham's *Wild Ride,*[18] but Everingham gave no source for his information, which might be another example of circular reporting, much like that found in the local histories. Nevertheless, it further highlighted VDL stage-coaching as a relative factual void.

The motive power unit of the stage-coach was the horse, but Cameron Forbes' recent *Australia on Horseback: The story of the horse and the making of a nation* included no mention of stage-coaches whatsoever, not even of the famous mainland Cobb & Co.[19] Strictly, his main title referred to the saddle horse; but his extended title implied, that by its omission, the coach horse played no part in Australian nation building. However, Forbes gave no purpose for his work. Similarly, Nan Mantle's *Horse and Rider* concentrated only on saddle horses.[20]

The National Museum of Australia's 2014-15 exhibition booklet, *Australia's Horse Story*, mentioned Cobb & Co but not any stage-coach operators in either VDL or NSW from the earlier period. One Tasmanian omnibus enterprise, dating from

---

[16] John Reynolds, *Launceston: History of an Australian City* (South Melbourne, 1969). pp. 38-39 and p. 84.
[17] Robert S. Lee, *Transport : an Australian history* (Sydney, 2010). p. 100.
[18] Sam Everingham, *Wild Ride - The Rise and Fall of Cobb & Co* (Camberwell, Victoria, 2007). p. 14.
[19] Cameron Forbes, *Australia on Horseback: The story of the horse and the making of a nation* (Sydney, 2014).
[20] Nanette Mantle, *Horse and Rider in Australian Legend* (Carlton, 2004).

1855 was mentioned,[21] and a generalisation might be that the Australian perception of stage-coaching was that it dated from the Victorian period.

Tasmanian, Ken Dallas's *Horsepower* provided a good analysis of the employment of horses as units of motive power; indeed, his description of a stage-coach being like 'an electric car which left its spent batteries for re-charging'[22] was a close analogy, but horse teams comprised the whole propulsion system and not merely its batteries. Again, his work was technically rather than business focused, but included a working description of a small enterprise in the island's north-west. Neither Forbes nor Mantle drew upon Dallas for their 'Australian' histories.

Malcolm Kennedy's *Hauling the Loads* situated horse drawn transport within the broader animal hauled transport industry and provided useful practical data regarding the consumption of fodder and the agricultural resources necessary to meet the need. Kennedy's account also provided perhaps the only balancing perspective on the utility of the Concord coach, so much promoted by Cobb & Co historians.[23]

Inns were another business element of stage-coach operations which made only background appearances. There was a hierarchy of inns within which coaching inns, and more specifically stage-coach inns, fell. However, the distinction was not made within the scant references. For instance, in VDL/Tasmania, McGuire's *Inns of Australia* listed only Hobart inns with some anecdotal annotations. Analysis of the *Ship Inn* for example was limited to the observation: 'the Launceston coaches ran to and from it', implying it had no further business function.[24]

Stancombe's *Highway* adopted a similar anecdotal approach towards inns, but with more inclusions. However, his work was limited to the main road.[25] Many inns have been included on the Tasmanian Heritage Register, but their statements of significance concentrate upon their architectural features, setting in the landscape, contribution to people's sense of place or association with historical personages. The register made little distinction between the hierarchy and different uses of inns, and

---

[21] National Museum of Australia, *Spirited: Australia's Horse Story* (Canberra, 2014), p. 16.
[22] K.M. Dallas, *Horsepower* (Hobart, 1968), p. 63.
[23] Malcolm J. Kennedy, *Hauling the Loads: A History of Australia's Working Horses and Bullocks* (Melbourne, 1992), p. 44.
[24] Paul McGuire, *Inns of Australia* (Melbourne, 1952), p. 61.
[25] Stancombe, *Highway in Van Diemen's Land*, passim.

rarely associated them with stage-coaches, even when applicable. Furthermore, inns were not a searchable category within the heritage database.

Cobb & Co historians made no mention of VDL stage-coaching other than that one of their drivers, 'Cabbage Tree Ned Devine' was a Tasmanian,[26] and to include a photograph of a bogged coach.[27] Cobb & Co was an Australian legend, but a Tasmanian myth; Cobb & Co did not run in Tasmania. Peter Cuffley's *Buggies etc* made one mention of Tasmanian stage-coaching;[28] his work is very useful for a technical understanding of vehicle construction and development in Australian usage, but did not situate coach-building in any colonial economic or business way.

Only three VDL/Tasmanian entrepreneurs were directly mentioned in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* as stage-coach operators.[29] Stancombe's entry for the Coxes was well founded but incomplete, and stage-coaching was incidental in the entry for John Pascoe Fawkner. The Samuel Page entry, written by a family member, was selective, and there was no mention of Alfred Burbury in the record of his father Thomas. Either stage-coach enterprises did not warrant mention, or they were deliberately excluded, or information was selectively precluded. As with the other biographies written by family members/friends/historians, the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* records must be used with caution: family motivations affected accounts through and beyond the later Victorian period.

Thus for the researcher, the predicament of Everitt's 'useful facts' pertained in England, Australia and Tasmania, and required a further succession of specialist reference works to establish a solid practical understanding of the industry. Similarly, the 'farrago' gleaned from the local historian and other works was often unreliable, erroneously referenced and misleading. Ultimately, its use was counter-productive and served only to reinforce the need to concentrate on primary sources.

---

[26] Joan Rutherford, *A History of Cobb & Co 1853-1955* (State Library of NSW - Mitchell Library, 1959?), p. 24.
[27] Kenneth Ashurst Austin, *A pictorial history of Cobb & Co: the coaching age in Australia, 1854-1924* (Adelaide, 1977), p. 108.
[28] Peter Cuffley, *Buggies and horse-drawn vehicles in Australia* (Lilydale, Vic., 1981), p. 70.
[29] National Centre of Biography, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Australian National University, http://adb/anu/edu/biography/.

With regard to the regulatory framework, the applicable colonial legislation was published in the *Hobart Town Gazette*.[30] English consideration and legal precedent leading to the passage of the colonial Acts could be found via the House of Commons Parliamentary Papers.[31] Colonial policy and discussion leading to passage of the colonial legislation was available through the Lieutenant-Governor's (later Governor's) annual address to the Legislative Council and reports of the meetings of the council, all contained in the *Hobart Town Gazette.*

For the stage-coach enterprises, directly applicable colonial legislation included for the regulation of: vehicles and drivers; the construction of roads and bridges (for the practicalities and organisation see Newitt);[32] the provision of ferries; innkeepers; business associations and co-partnerships; insolvency (later bankruptcy); real property, including ownership by women; municipalities (especially with regard to local Road Trusts, for the effects of which see Rootes);[33] the Post Office; police powers; relations between masters, servants and apprentices; liability; and the prevention of cruelty to animals. Further criminal and civil law deliberations were available through contemporary reporting in the press.

Hartwell, though dated, is still the most comprehensive authority for an analysis of the changing colonial economy.[34] However, he went only as far as the middle of the 19th century, as did Noel Butlin's *Forming a Colonial Economy*, which provided the larger Australian setting as well as specific VDL data;[35] and while Butlin's earlier work covered the second half of the century, it concentrated very largely upon the mainland.[36]

---

[30] *The Hobart Town Gazette*.
[31] Peter Cockton, *Subject catalogue of the House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1801-1900* (Cambridge, 1988).
[32] Lyn Newitt, Alan Jones, and Tasmanian Department of Main Roads Historical Committee, *Convicts & carriageways: Tasmanian road development until 1880* (Hobart, 1988).
[33] Grant Rootes, *A Chaotic State of Affairs?: the permissive system of local government in rural Tasmania 1840-1907* (University of Tasmania, PhD thesis, 2008).
[34] R.M. Hartwell, *The economic development of Van Diemen's Land : 1820-1850* (Carlton, Vic., 1954).
[35] N.G. Butlin, *Forming a Colonial Economy, Australia 1810-1850* (Cambridge, 1994).
[36] N.G. Butlin, *Investment in Australian Economic Development 1861-1900* (London, 1964).

As no other economist seemed to take up the challenge of continuing the assessment of the island's economy in the latter half of the 19th century, Lloyd Robson's *History of Tasmania* was the default alternative;[37] Robson's second volume drew from primary sources to produce an almost encyclopaedic text-book and reference set. Both of Robson's volumes are narratives with commentary rather than an analysis of the outcomes of governance, but they provide a general background to the economic situation and demonstrate the complexity of the changing colonial society.

Therefore, for the latter part of the period, only raw economic data was available, some of which could be gleaned from gazetted government budget statements. Tabulated statistics were also published in the almanacks, and a sample graph, taken from *Walch's Tasmanian Almanack*, is at Figure 6.1.[38]

The largest change to the island's economy in the latter half of the 19th century was brought about by mineral discoveries. Mining introduced new populations into areas previously unsettled and prompted the need for passenger transport. Two works by Glyn Roberts comprehensively addressed Tasmanian mining developments, although no associated stage-coaches were mentioned.[39] Nevertheless, Roberts' works explained where new stage-coach enterprises were subsequently located.

Many stage-coach business arrangements were driven by mail contracts, which were regulated by the *Post Office Acts*. Specific contracts were let after requests for tender were called in the *Gazette* and later also in the newspapers. Letters, some of which are held in the Colonial Secretary's Office record of the Tasmanian archives, were the normal means of negotiating contract variations; and a further source for Post Office related business arrangements is a report into the colonial Post Office held in the UK Post Office archives. Unfortunately, Adnum's *History of the Post Office in Tasmania* was a preliminary document, which did not lead to the successor for which its author had hoped.[40] Consequently it holds some very useful (and reliable) information but is limited.

---

[37] L.L. Robson, *A History of Tasmania. Volume II, Colony and state from 1856 to the 1980s* (Melbourne, 1991).
[38] J. Walch, *Walch's Tasmanian Almanack* (Hobart Town, 1891).
[39] eg Glyn Roberts, *Metal mining in Tasmania 1804 to 1914 : how government helped shape the mining industry* (Launceston, 2007).
[40] V.B. Adnum, *A History of the Post Office in Tasmania* (Hobart, 1975), p. 3.

Correspondence between contractor and government held in the Tasmanian archives also gave a good indication of the costs of business and variations caused by the local economy. Similar business costs were to be found in letters to the newspapers; but my contacts with the family historians descended from the three main stage-coach entrepreneurs unfortunately failed to disclose any remaining company accounts. Recalling the background nature of stage-coaching, the family historians were more concerned with genealogy and their limited knowledge of the enterprises seemed to have been gleaned from the erroneous local histories.

Alan Atkinson described a 'revolution in communications' during the 19th century, spoke of interconnectedness, an age of system, webs and networks of movement, free enterprise and a single market in which to situate the settlers.[41] His description precisely situated the contemporary social and market environment of the stage-coach enterprises, which were private enterprise communications elements within the larger transport system and with widespread social and business networks.

The prevalence of concern around monopoly in the press at the time suggested that the most appropriate means to situate the enterprises within the business ethic of the period was to consult Adam Smith.[42] The colonial entrepreneurs' dilemma was to balance business effectiveness and social propriety,[43] therefore both of Smith's works were relevant aids in contemporising that dilemma. However, as studies of workforce management were largely undertaken in the 20th century, they have not been used.

Jonathan Hughes' observed that 'economic historians [had] turned away from entrepreneurial studies' and, as if to fill that void, his study, *The Vital Few,* which included 19th century transport entrepreneurs, provided very useful analysis leading to a comparative type structure with which to assess the motives of the VDL/Tasmanian stage-coach entrepreneurs.[44]

---

[41] Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: Democracy*, 3 vols., vol. 2 (South Melbourne, 2004), pp. xiv-xvi.
[42] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (New York, 1994).
[43] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, The Glasgow edition of the works and correspondence of Adam Smith, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1976), pp. 9-13.
[44] Jonathan Hughes, *The Vital Few: American Economic Progress and its Protagonists* (New York, 1973), p. vi.

The organisation and regulation of businesses was a government interest throughout the period, and legislation such as the *Insolvent Debtors Act (1830)* and the *Co-partnerships Act (1844)* was gazetted. Therefore, many forms of business arrangements, recognisable today, applied during the period; but however the enterprises were organised or conducted, they were the responsibility, and consisted, of individuals. Those individuals existed within a number of settings.

The 'Second British Empire' provides one description of their globally interconnected, strategic setting, which Harlow characterised as follows: learning from colonial (Irish and American) mistakes; the use of adaptive governance models (eg Canada); world mercantilism; seeking trade rather than colonies; and by developing social and (rather than) political relationships.[45] British national interests during the period required colonies to be self-financing, and encompassed a need to export a burgeoning population and adapt to changing moral and ethical values, such as the abolition of slavery, and the inferred comparison with the treatment of convicts.

The VDL penal colony setting therefore presented a particular, social circumstance for the enterprises. In *Tasmania's convicts,* Alison Alexander described the unspoken rules which guided social interaction between the 'always free' and the convict (a word never to be used). She remarked that while resourcefulness was a characteristic of pioneer societies, cynicism and distrust of authority were not, attributing the latter to the convict heritage. Unusually, the Vandemonian ex-convicts were a large proportion of the population, who consequently felt 'no need for humility'.[46]

Colonial society changed, albeit slowly, following the end of transportation. Although he was referring to culture rather than society, Richard Waterhouse, drawing upon Max Weber and Clifford Geertz, considered man was an animal suspended in webs of his own making and defined culture as those webs.[47] The island's particular demographic circumstances produced different strands in a colonial

---

[45] Vincent Todd Harlow, *The Founding of the Second British Empire, 1763-1793, Vol 1* (London, 1952).
[46] Alison Alexander, *Tasmania's convicts : how felons built a free society* (Crows Nest, N.S.W., 2010), p. 71 and p. 80.
[47] Richard Waterhouse, *Private Pleasures, Public Leisure: A History of Australian Popular Culture since 1788* (Melbourne, 1995), p. ix.

web, and the resultant culture brought opportunities for stage-coaches to support social development and civil society.

Free settlers were another element of the colonial social mix, and whereas Alan Atkinson spoke of a revolution in communications, Zoë Laidlaw described a settler revolution. Echoing Harlow, she considered settlement was more enduring than empire and, in turn, introduced different types of settlers: founders or followers, and (intentionally impermanent) sojourners. These were relevant considerations for situating colonial stage-coach entrepreneurs, as were distinctions between public servants and non-official colonisers, notions of Britishness and questions of scale; but given the apparently background nature of stage-coach services, her observations about the everyday, gradual, tedious, cumulative, processes were most telling.[48]

James Belich carried the question of the nature of the settlers further and very relevantly for VDL/Tasmania linked it to the economy. The three socio-economic sectors of his 'booming settler societies' reverted to two during the inevitable subsequent bust.[49]

Two further issues emerge: the question of class, and the extent to which Britishness affected colonial society and the enterprises. E.P. Thompson believed class was an historical phenomenon, not a structure or a category, and considered that it was based upon a difference in legitimate power.[50] Russel Ward on the other hand readily discussed class, which he compared with the British class system. Importantly, he linked the strengthening of nationalist feeling with the eventual majority status achieved by the native born.[51] The experiences of the stage-coach entrepreneurs and their attitudes would test these hypotheses, particularly during the Victorian period.

That Britishness played a part was self-evident; the questions were in what way, to what extent and for how long? The importation of stage-coach associated materiel was a practical example, but imported attitudes and values permeated society and changed throughout the period.

---

[48] Zoë Laidlaw, 'Breaking Britannia's Bounds? Law, Settlers, and Space in Britain's Imperial Historiography', *The Historical Journal* 55, no. 3 (2012), passim.
[49] James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: the Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-world, 1783-1939* (New York, 2009), pp. 548-56.
[50] E.P. Thompson, *The making of the English working class* (Ringwood, Vic., 1968), pp. 9-11.
[51] Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend* (Melbourne, 1966), p. 193.

A.N. Wilson, often drawing from Dickens and particularly *Pickwick*, assumed a somewhat different attitude towards class from that of Thompson. Wilson's 'important' middle class (the *petite bourgeoisie*) included a growing reading public with increasing prosperity and time for leisure activities.[52] Both of these characteristics presented opportunities for stage-coach ventures. For Wilson, in the Victorian period, class was institutionalised through a hierarchy of schooling, and citing the Reverend Nathaniel Woodard, he further divided the middle class: a second tier including respectable trades folk; and the third tier, publicans.[53] Woodard's contemporary opinion therefore situated the stage-coach entrepreneurs and the associated innkeepers in the middle to lower middle class, a specific (and contemporary) social categorisation contrary to Thompson's view.

Wilson also described the tension between the will to put injustice, ignorance and disease firmly in the past, and a belief that industrialisation was destroying the world, as a defining socio-political dichotomy of the age. Consequently, stage-coaches became nostalgic symbols.[54] The place of enterprises in the free market resulted in another tension: between capitalists and government bureaucrats, which Wilson cautioned was liable to anachronistic interpretation. Hence, contemporaneously, the stage-coach entrepreneurs should not be regarded as 'right-wing'; the tension at the time (recalling Dickens' 'Circumlocution Office' [*Little Dorrit*]) was between free enterprise and (bureaucratic, right-wing) 'paternalistic interfering Toryism'.[55]

While some of the irreverence shown by Russel Ward's nomad tribe and noble bushmen was evident in VDL/Tasmania, the workforce of the stage-coach enterprises seemed not necessarily to conform to the colonial socialist pattern of inland workers on the mainland.[56] Belich's 'man among men subculture' common to 'all the Anglophone settler nations' provided an alternative, though again incomplete, explanation and perhaps these alternative theories served only to indicate a difference between the mainland and its offshore island. The largely family business nature of

[52] A.N. Wilson, *The Victorians* (London, 2002), p. 19.
[53] Ibid., pp. 281-82.
[54] Ibid., pp. 21-22.
[55] Ibid., p. 20.
[56] Ward, *The Australian Legend*, pp. 180-82 and pp. 211-13.

the stage-coach enterprises and their workforce was a further difference, which complicated any like-with-like comparison.[57]

In one further Pickwickian allusion, recalling the free market/propriety ethical dilemma of Adam Smith, Wilson asserted that the excesses of entrepreneurs were 'held in check by a tremendously simplified form of Christian charity'.[58] He also cautioned against generalisation. Undoubtedly abuse was rife in the Victorian period, but throughout, there were always people acting benevolently. Some Dickensian characters challenge modern comprehension, but Wilson believed Dickens considered that the power of good was vested in personalities and not reliant upon political process. Individuals managed and populated the enterprises, and Everitt's 'Pickwickian nonsense' was not nonsense in many circumstances.

Therefore, from the review, although some mention of stage-coach proprietors, vehicles and their operations was contained in VDL/Tasmanian histories, no work assessed the enterprises from a business perspective. Stage-coaches were incidental inclusions in works of other purposes and no attempt was made to situate them within the broader colonial communications and transport system. Likewise, no work examined the components necessary for an effective stage-coach enterprise, or their inter-relationship. This deficiency was compounded by inaccurate accounts, which were recirculated in local, and other histories. More broadly, studies of land transport, other than that which was mechanically powered, were similarly lacking.

Furthermore, with the exception of two mail coach studies in England, overseas analyses of stage-coach enterprises are scarce. The content of the historiography of passenger transport in colonial NSW resembles that of VDL in its restricted, selective, anecdotal and unanalytical nature. Cobb & Co historians provided historical narratives of the company, but that enterprise was not established until well into the Victorian period.

One reason for these apparent deficiencies might have been the degree of difficulty in researching beyond available secondary sources. Altogether in VDL/Tasmania, those sources mentioned only about ten stage-coach entrepreneurs, yet as Appendix B shows, more than 300 were identifiable from primary sources.

---

[57] Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: the Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-world, 1783-1939*, p. 549.
[58] Wilson, *The Victorians*, p. 22.

Without first confirming the scale of colonial stage-coach enterprises, there was no possibility of placing them, as an industry, into any larger legal, economic, business or social historical context.

Sources

Research commenced with a review of the secondary sources to establish an understanding of the accepted history. Instead, it served to show the unreliable and contradictory nature of the historiography. What had been intended to form a sound basis confirmed the need to resort to primary sources and start afresh. Warren Prewer might have reached a similar decision point when he stated 'There is a constant conflict in information regarding Pages and Lords. Every author on these families uses a different version of facts and dates';[59] but in fact, each author had an incomplete set of information. Prewer went no further.

The *Historical Records of Australia*[60] was the start-point for accounts of government decisions, exploration, road development and timings, which led to the development of the infrastructure and services to support the communications system; but information about vehicles and transport services was only to be found in articles, advertisements, editorials, letters and obituaries contained in the newspapers of the time. The main part of the research task was therefore to review around one hundred years of VDL/Tasmanian (and some other) newspapers.

Newspapers were available via three media: hardcopy, microfilm or on-line. The *Hobart Town Gazette* was not available on-line, and several relevant newspapers were only placed on-line during the research period. Although the National Library of Australia website (TROVE)[61] provided a comprehensive searchable database, deficiencies in the character recognition software caused many items to be missed: eg the software often misinterpreted 'coach' as 'coacb' and therefore excluded relevant articles during a search. TROVE was therefore useful, but fallible.

There were many options for the organisation of the newspaper material, but to improve accuracy in referencing I chose to store them by separate folder for each

---

[59] Warren Prewer, *A History of the Hobart to Launceston Coach Services 1832-1876* (2004), p. 10.
[60] Frederick Watson, *Historical Records of Australia. Series III., Despatches and papers relating to the settlement of the states* (Sydney, 1921).
[61] National Library of Australia, *TROVE*, http://www.trove.nla.gov.au.

newspaper. Into the folders, articles were downloaded in Microsoft®Word© format (after being corrected in TROVE) and stored chronologically. The result was a vast personal newspaper archive which could be searched in Word. This (TROVE/Word) powerful capability was a tool relatively recently available to researchers, whose hardcopy difficulties in finding, collating and organising so many newpaper articles might be one reason why no coach industry study had previously been undertaken.

Similarly, the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* was available on-line,[62] as was Hamish Maxwell-Stewart's team's *Founders and Survivors* database of the records of VDL convicts.[63] The latter provided a swift determination of whether an entrepreneur or employee within an enterprise was of convict origin, and gave an indication of existing skill-sets and possible county of origin. Such data quickly helped to inform analysis of the colonial social and workforce mix.

Therefore, digital databases, on-line services and computerised search programs not only accelerated and assured the research process, but were also useful analytical tools. Again, these technological aids helped to mitigate those data collection and analysis tasks which might have deterred earlier researchers of colonial stage-coach enterprises. The more traditional sources used for information gathering are shown in the bibliography.

Nevertheless, the vast amount of information was not easily comprehended, and a process of writing for understanding was necessary. Therefore, a chronological narrative was written which helped to establish the who, what, when, where, with whom questions, prompted some why and how questions, and highlighted the issues that required further research. Ultimately, the narrative thus constructed was consigned *in toto* to another archive best described as a personal reference text; and while cause, effect and sequence were important to establish a high degree of certainty, the record thus produced was an inefficent structure for analysis and stylistically dry, although it contained a large number of interesting stories! However, by that time the size and scope of the subject seemed established and main themes were evident.

---

[62] Australian National University, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, http://www.adb.anu.edu.au.
[63] Founders & Survivors, http://www.foundersandsurvivors.org.

Methodology

Seven broad themes and one key question, potentially leading to a chapter structure or alternatively to be used as analytical measures within each chapter, were identified. However, the thesis uses a contemporary, comparative approach to data and information, rather than attempting to equate colonial, to modern values. Indeed, the themes, below, were better suited to qualitative rather than quantitative assessment, or to any empirical modelling:

1. The extent of British influence, including legislation, commercial models, business practices, vehicles and equipment, values and social structures.
2. The class of persons within the enterprises, considering convict, free, family, gender, ethnicity, regionality, religion, social standing, hierarchies, wealth, patronage, politics and influence.
3. The part played by the Post Office in the development of the industry, including the importance and value of a mail contract.
4. The business skills of the entrepreneurs; their style, approach, management, planning, networks, initiative, flexibility and ambitions.
5. Threats, risks, constraints, changes over time, and the management thereof.
6. The size, scale and value of the enterprises, and collectively as a colonial industry: to include people, assets, horses, feed, buildings, capital, inputs to the economy, inputs to society, employment, internal/export trade, and the proportion of the activity dedicated to stage-coaching.
7. The impact of the stage-coach service upon the colony's social development, and *vice versa*.
8. Was there an identifiable successful type? What constituted success for the entrepreneurs? Did that correspond with a successful outcome for government and colonial development?

One contemporary framework for measuring success was the 'ends, ways, means' approach, as used by Lieutenant-Governor Arthur;[64] but as the questions above implied, different agencies had separate objectives. Thus 'ends, ways, means' applied separately to government and private enterprise, within which priorities

[64] eg Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council of Van Diemen's Land, Council Chamber, 1st October, 1834, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 2 October 1834, pp. 732-35.

differed and changed over time. Furthermore, any analysis of the overlying colonial environment had to include external and internal effects (shocks and discontinuities), the effectiveness of governance, step advances, and other factors such as changing interests and influences (national, colony, societal, individual), and failures of communication and management.

The foremost of the ends of both government and private enterprise was to bring about change. Change 'never takes place by itself; it always needs the intervention of *men*'. Those men (Jonathan Hughes' entrepreneurs were all men, but this thesis will show that many women managed large English and VDL/Tasmanian stage-coach enterprises, and one woman, Mary Ann Cox, was arguably the most successful of all the colonial examples), the agents of change, were entrepreneurs, ie those who 'put together "new combinations" of economic factors to change the flow of economic life'. The most effective were only 'a handful, a vital few'.[65]

From the above, the most suitable analytical framework seemed to be a matrix of the identified themes overlaid by the four key research questions. However, to use such an approach assumed knowledge of the history on the part of the reader, and clearly that information was not known. Therefore, some degree of descriptive narrative had to be included in the structure, although the risk of 'Pickwickian nonsense' was ever present!

Framework and Approach

The thesis is broken into three chronological parts, which might be considered as the origins of the industry, its operation in a mature phase, and its response to change. The first chapter draws directly from the first theme, viz British influence, to provide a background understanding of the imported, contemporary practices of stage-coaching.

Chapter 2 is in two parts: a summary of the situation which confronted the entrepreneurs in a penal colonial project whose start-point, from a governance and communications infrastructure perspective, was zero; and a review of the colonial legislation which was introduced and developed, and which directly affected the industry. If the origin of the operating environment was an effective zero, in contrast,

[65] Jonathan Hughes, *The Vital Few: American Economic Progress and its Protagonists* (New York, 1973), p. 14 and p. 3.

the legislative framework was comprehensive and complex. I recommend Chapter 2 be read in two parts.

A case study approach was used for Chapters 3-6. The third chapter provides a description of the factors which affected the nascent industry to conclude the first part (origins). The middle part examines enterprises on the main line of road, and each chapter uses specific examples to address the various analytical themes.

Chapter 7 opens the final part with a review of how the supporting and component elements of the industry worked together; and Chapter 8 principally examines how the industry adapted to change. The conclusion summarises the findings and, while cognisant of the themes, examines the implications using the four key research questions as its structure.

Some administrative matters are relevant to the content. Place names changed over time, and have been used as published at the time. For ease of understanding therefore, contemporary maps have been included in the relevant chapters. Imperial measurements of distances and weights have been retained without conversion. Where included, the main purpose of the measurements is to provide comparative data and to convert them into fractions within a decimal system would derive little benefit.

Similarly with money, the pound has been retained without any attempt at conversion. Within the thesis, comparisons over time are more important than any value correlated with modern times, and a contemporary indication of wages is provided as an empirical alternative. Thus, no attempt has been made to translate a colonial pound into a modern equivalent value. Indeed, the study will show that fluctuations in the colonial economy would also leave the reader wondering about the fiscal year variations in the value of the modern stock-market or Australian dollar being compared.

With very few exceptions, footnotes are used only for citations. However, when available, the titles of newspaper articles have been included in the citation, as they serve to develop a sense of social understanding of the changing contemporary setting.

Conclusion

In conclusion, although transport infrastructure has been selectively researched and reported, and stage-coaches have been coincidentally included in works of other purpose, coaching in VDL/Tasmania as an industry has not been specifically examined. The research contained in this thesis into the coaching industry therefore presents new work.

The industry's setting transitioned from penal, through self-governing colony to statehood within an Australian federation, and the population (its market) developed unreliably. For stage-coach enterprises therefore, the larger environment was one of complexity and change, and the immediate environment was one of commercial risk.

The analytical framework outlined above will help to identify the factors which determined an enterprise's success or failure within those environments and in so doing will assess the contribution made by the industry to the island's social and economic development.

PART 1 - ORIGINS

CHAPTER 1

AN ENGLISH HERITAGE …

Stage-coaches evoked romance, nostalgia and spectacle to delight colonial settlers who enjoyed the news from 'home'. Although the stage-coaches of VDL could not match the numbers or frequency of their English counterparts, they were otherwise very similar. Colonial newspapers carried reports of English stage-coaches, fostering a sense of understanding of their operations, and of the social mores and hierarchies which accompanied them.

However, English mail- and stage-coaches carried more than letters, parcels and passengers; they carried the latest intelligence, be that news of victories in battle or snippets of gossip from just down the road; and their speed and quality were a source of pride. 'Every carriage, on every morning in the year, was taken down to an inspector for examination - wheels, axles, linchpins, pole, glasses, &c, were critically probed and tested. Every part of every carriage had been cleaned, every horse had been groomed' reported *Blackwood's Magazine* about the daily departure of mail coaches from London, in an article which was reproduced for colonial readership by the *Colonial Times*.[1] The colonists had a sophisticated understanding and expectation of mail and coach operations, and their associated services.

While public transport built around the post messenger system, and using wayside inns, at regular stages, to furnish a change of horses, had been used by the Romans, Thrupp associated the first use of the term 'stage' in England to the stage-waggons, which carried goods and passengers, in the 16th century,[2] and Malet defined a 'stage' as 'the distance run with the same team'.[3] Initially, the coach body was suspended on leather straps, before steel springs were introduced by 1754. A speed of

---

[1] DEPARTED GLORY OF THE MAIL COACH, in *Colonial Times*, 29 March 1850, p. 4.
[2] George Athelstane Thrupp, *The History of Coaches* (London, 1877), p. 99.
[3] Harold Esdaile Malet and Nimrod, *Annals of the road : or, notes on mail and stage coaching in Great Britain* (London, 1876), Appendix A, p. 395.

4 mph was normal, although dependent upon the road surface and conditions, which also dictated the number of horses required, and from as early as 1704, passengers were limited to 14lbs of luggage, above which an extra charge was levied.[4] The quantum of this luggage requirement remained usual, even in VDL in the 19th century[5] (and equates to the limit for carry-on baggage in modern airlines). By 1775 there were 400 stage-coaches on the Annual Register in England and the government introduced a license fee in 1779.[6]

Stage-coach services were initially limited to within 30 miles of London, but as early as 1629, a service to Cambridge (54 miles, taking two days) had begun,[7] and by the end of the 17th century, long-distance services had been established. The advantages for travellers, apart from the reduced cost (*vis-a-vis* ownership or singular hire), were that those who had not previously been able to travel independently, could now do so. Thus, such as the old, invalids, children, gout sufferers and pregnant women, for whom horseback would have been difficult or risky, then swelled the number of travellers. These advantages were also realised in VDL, where the government contracted stage-coaches to carry government officials, prisoners and invalids.[8]

Coach travel, by introducing mechanisation, also removed the need for the arduous individual planning and execution, so necessary in horseback journeys, and commenced a transition 'from a world in which a man did things for himself, towards a world in which he has things done for him'.[9] Perhaps surprisingly, despite the number of horses required to sustain the services, the overall number of horses decreased, as private citizens gave up their mounts and carriage horses, to use stage-coaches instead.

While, of course, the routes connected the centres of population, the frequency and balance of the services were dependent on a range of social, economic and seasonal factors, which complicated the business. The coach was a small transport

---

[4] Thrupp, *The History of Coaches*, p. 106.
[5] eg. *Launceston Courier*, 4 October 1841, p. 3.
[6] Thrupp, *The History of Coaches*, pp. 108-9.
[7] John Ernest Victor Crofts, *Packhorse, waggon and post: land carriage and communications under the Tudors and Stuarts* (London, 1967), p. 125.
[8] TENDERS, in *Launceston Examiner*, 9 January 1850, p. 5.
[9] Crofts, *Packhorse, waggon and post: land carriage and communications under the Tudors and Stuarts*, p. 132.

unit, which could be flexibly diverted between operations according to profitability. Its supporting logistics, however, were less flexible, and the owners of the coach and its ancillary services might be as numerous as the stages on a route. G.C. Dickinson described proprietorial organisations as 'frequently informal, easily varied and diffuse', and quoted Bradley's mention of twenty-four shareholders, in twenty-one towns involved in the operation of the London to Carlisle mail coach in 1796.[10] This organisational complexity also translated to the colonies.

Although railways were beginning to enter service, Dickinson considered 1830-40 the heyday of coaching;[11] this timeframe coincided with the first expansion of stage-coach services in VDL. Although Yorkshire had a larger population, smaller area and different industrial makeup than VDL, it offered a mature coaching industry against which to judge its colonial counterpart. A standard regional operation involved a four-horse vehicle, with four inside and seven outside passengers, travelling at about 10 mph, and changing horses approximately every ten miles. Inns constituted the termini and horse-changing stages, and the innkeepers were usually their proprietors, and also the proprietors of the horses.[12]

Long-haul routes out of the county usually operated the same vehicle through to its destination, but shorter routes were conducted out and back in a day. Frequencies were determined by passenger demand, but services to market towns were run on market days, and services to the spas and seaside were run seasonally. Finally, Dickinson noted that although sentiment bestowed attention on romantic routes such as the Great North Road, it was on the regional routes that traffic was densest; but in any case, although stage-coach services introduced regular passenger transport to the public, the numbers travelling were never very large.[13]

Despite the differences in scale, most of the foregoing observations were applicable in VDL, and although market towns did not have a colonial equivalent, opportunity services to auctions in the settled districts were provided, and coaches

---

[10] G.C. Dickinson, 'Stage-coach Services in the West Riding of Yorkshire between 1830 and 1840', *The Journal of Transport History,* vol. 4, no. 1 (May 1959), p. 3. (T. Bradley, The Old Coaching Days in Yorkshire, (1889), p. 111.)
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid., p. 4.
[13] Ibid., pp. 5-11.

always ran to the races.[14] The main road and branch route parallel was particularly appropriate. Also, although the decade 1830-40 was relatively early in the settlement of the colony, any comparative lag in development was short.

The distance of the routes also affected the design of stage-coaches. A three-horse 'Omnibus' carrying eight passengers, all inside, was developed in Paris in 1820, and introduced to London in 1829, to service shorter routes.[15] Yet, by 1831, *The Hobart Town Courier* reported John Webb, 'son of the celebrated coach builder in London,' had brought out a valuable investment of carriages including 'two stage-coaches built in the manner of the modern Omnibus'.[16] These were reportedly constructed for local conditions and carried six passengers inside, sitting sideways, and four outside, plus one next to the driver.

Fig 1.1 – Webb's Omnibus

In the following year (1832), James Roberts, in the first confirmed example of a Tasmanian built, four-horse stage-coach, announced a new stage coach, to carry '8 inside and 8 outside passengers', which he had had 'built in Hobart town … upon the Omnibus plan'.[17] Thus, omnibuses adapted for colonial conditions were imported within two years of their introduction to London, and within three years colonially adapted designs were being locally manufactured. Although comparatively small, the

[14] eg, *Colonial Times*, 10 September 1833, p. 1 and 17 March 40, p. 1.
[15] Thrupp, *The History of Coaches*, pp. 121-2.
[16] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 11 June 1831, p. 3.
[17] Ibid., 10 March 1832, p. 3.

developing colonial enterprises were swift to adopt and adapt examples from overseas.

In England, coach-building factories had grown in size and importance, and some stage-coach proprietors became very wealthy. William Chaplin of the *Swan with Two Necks* held mail contracts and operated 12 mail coaches, as well as other stage-coaches to support which he owned 1200 horses;[18] he also had two hotels and five yards,[19] and was not without competitors. None of the commentators however, seem to mention the number of business failures which must have occurred in the fluid market.

Gentlemen took up driving as a sport and two clubs were formed to cater for the development of stage-coach design and promotion of 'four-in-hand' driving as a manly skill.[20] This interest also reached the colonies with colonial, visitor and royal participation.[21]

While Dickinson had mentioned that coaching enterprises relied upon the innkeepers, who owned their inns and horses,[22] that situation had been developmental. In the early 18th century, innkeepers were usually tenants,[23] but by the end of the century, the more successful were owners. From the perspective of VDL, the question was therefore which English period best reflected the colonial situation. Also, there were some differences between the functions of an inn in London, as the terminus, and those in the regions. Would those distinctions translate to the colony?

Regardless of location, the functions of an inn were more than the provision of food and lodging, and were dependent upon the social standing of the patrons and the type of transport industry, which they supported. In whichever situation however, they were vital commercial institutions. In the regions, they were trading hubs for goods including agricultural seed, cloth, horses, leather and many other commodities;

---

[18] Appendix 19, Evidence of Mr William Chaplin, 11 April 1835, in House of Commons, *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the Post Office Department*, in *Cockton 1835 (313) XLVIII.399 mf 38.380-81* (1835), p. 75.
[19] Thrupp, *The History of Coaches*, p. 115.
[20] James W. Burgess, *Practical treatise on coach-building* (London, 1881), p. 20.
[21] eg, THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH IN TASMANIA, in *The Mercury*, 16 January 1868, p. 2.
[22] Dickinson, 'Stage-coach Services in the West Riding', p. 4.
[23] J.A. Chartres, 'The Capital's Provincial Eyes: London's Inns in the Early Eighteenth Century', *The London Journal* vol. 3, no. 1 (May 1977), p. 28.

and they were business venues for travelling doctors and salesmen, and a place in which to hold auctions.[24]

In London, a regional representative role was added to these functions, as the inns were the termini of the coach routes into the city, and were collocated in areas served by the road system. For example, traffic via the Great North Road serviced Yorkshire, and the associated inns catered, *inter alia*, for the business interests of Yorkshire industries, received and accommodated passengers from the county, served as a regional point of entry, facilitated introductions into London, and provided a meeting place for fellow Yorkshire folk in the capital.[25] While VDL's Main Road was a trunk route equivalent, could Hobart Town or Launceston have been considered as capital cities? Or, was there a regional parallel, with Launceston as a subordinate? Or was the regional émigré comparison best found in migrants arriving in Hobart Town, with their imported nationalities and subordinate, regional identities?

The capital city, terminus inn was a locus for a 'confederacy of business interests'.[26] The two main types architecturally, were the courtyard or blockhouse, but their principal requirement was a large yard and easy access from the street so that coaches and waggons could turn without reversing. Supporting infrastructure included stables, barns, kitchens, service rooms and guest rooms, but also, separate independent businesses such as ironmongers, blacksmiths and grocers were housed in the complex. The regional, trade-specific focus also involved the warehousing of goods, and led to sub- or co-tenancies to offset the high cost of rental in London by spreading the overhead.[27]

Perhaps because these functions were more mundane than those conducted in coffee houses such as Lloyd's, the business contributions of the inns have not achieved similar renown. Indeed, Chartres suggested they were 'underrated historiographically'.[28] Nevertheless, innkeepers became custodians of the goods of travellers and merchants; and consequently, as bailees, they developed a form of legal relationship with a degree of liability. In the regions, innkeepers also provided a

---

[24] A. Everitt, *Perspectives in English Urban History* (London, 1973) pp. 104-7.
[25] Chartres, 'The Capital's Provincial Eyes: London's Inns in the Early Eighteenth Century', p. 32.
[26] Ibid., p. 27.
[27] Ibid., pp. 25-27.
[28] Ibid., p. 29.

limited agency and banking function before the spread of regional banks.[29] For VDL, with its convict and expiree population, the performance of such functions incurred more risk for travellers, investors and associates.

To place the diversified functions of the inns into perspective with regard to taverns and alehouses, in 1720, inns represented only four per cent of London's liquor outlets.[30] This proportion did not change significantly over time, and was reflected in the colonial experience. While there were many inns, taverns, alehouses, and hotels, coaching inns were a specialised minority, within which serving alcohol was only one of many functions.

The functions and requirements of the regional inns, while similar, expanded upon those of the termini. Everitt noted that historians had conducted no systemic examination of the functions of inns in England.[31] Nor has any similar functional analysis of colonial inns in VDL been undertaken; for instance, the inclusions for Hobart Town in McGuire's *Inns of Australia* are little more than lists of the names of inns.[32] The same comment could be made for the remainder of Australia in the book.

Outside London, inns might be classified into two types: those in the county and market towns, and those in the 'thoroughfare towns' on the principal roads, on which 'stages' had developed approximately every 25-30 miles, which was the distance the early coaches had been able to cover in a day.[33] Intermediate stations, with lesser inns, were sited where a mid-day break was taken and horses were exchanged. Within the towns, the preferred site for an inn was in close proximity to the market place, but the narrow streets of some towns restricted the passage of coaches and waggons, and extra-mural suburbs sprang up outside to cater for coaches and waggons.

One social consequence of this development, was the use of extra-mural/parochial inns for the delivery of illegitimate births.[34] A combination of travel to another area by stage-coach and a supportive landlady facilitated secrecy around

---

[29] Everitt, *Perspectives in English Urban History*, p. 109.
[30] Chartres, 'The Capital's Provincial Eyes: London's Inns in the Early Eighteenth Century', p. 37.
[31] Everitt, *Perspectives in English Urban History*, p. 91.
[32] Paul McGuire, *Inns of Australia* (Melbourne, 1952), pp. 58-64.
[33] Everitt, *Perspectives in English Urban History*, pp. 94-5.
[34] Ibid., pp. 99-100.

the birth and helped unmarried mothers to evade some of the local consequences of an illegitimate delivery. Often the seducer would foot the bill, but in *Adam Bede*, Hetty Sorrel had no help from her deceiver in her quest to avoid discovery and resolve her situation. The costs of coach travel exhausted her meagre funds; she was convicted of child murder but her sentence was commuted to transportation.[35]

Everitt used the case of Northampton to exemplify the hierarchy that existed within the regional or county inns, but the same hierarchical relationships were evident in other counties, and indeed in London. The first order inns were the county inns, of which Everitt listed only three in the town. The landlords of these inns were described as gentlemen, but that did not preclude widows from running the business. Mary Lyon successfully operated as innkeeper for twenty years (from 1704) and introduced the first stage-coach service to London from Northampton, a service she continued to run even after giving up the inn. Later, Sloswick Carr's widow likewise ran the inn (from 1751) and introduced a faster coach service to London.[36] In VDL, widows Mary Ann Cox and Mahala Mills followed this lead.

The second tier of regional inns, which Everitt estimated at 10-15 within Northampton, catered for the local gentry, hosted the corporation, and facilitated the business activities of travelling factors and merchants and the local wholesale and retail traders. One inn also served as the Post Office with the commercial advantage of renting out the post horses.[37] These two tiers comprised the coaching inns, being differentiated from a travellers' perspective by the wealth and rank of the patrons. The first tier also catered for the carriages of the aristocracy, so the bulk of stage-coach traffic probably used the second tier inns. Nevertheless, as with the ratio of inns serving liquor to other hostelries, the coaching inns (in the Northampton example a maximum of 18) were a very small proportion of inns in general.

Thus, the majority of inns comprised a third tier, which catered for carriers; and little is known, or survives, of the small inns in the fourth tier beyond their names and locations, but they probably catered for drovers and travellers on foot. However, from surviving inventories, Everitt estimated this fourth group at around half of the

---

[35] George Eliot, *Adam Bede*, Regent Classics (London, 1960), pp. 163-74, p. 95 and p. 208.
[36] Everitt, *Perspectives in English Urban History*, pp. 123-26.
[37] Ibid., pp. 126-27.

total.[38] Again, these ratios are representative of the colonial situation and the sorts of uses of the inns.

A further element of this hierarchy was the social use, and indeed status, of the county inns, not directly associated with the coaching industry, but which generated reasons to travel. The inns played a vital role in the annual, regional, social calendar for both the county, and the non-landed but nevertheless leisured, professional classes within the towns. Assemblies, balls, dinners, card parties, public breakfasts, often associated with the horse races, were staged by the county inns, usually in a coordinated way to share the workload and business between each other.

Within the inns, assembly rooms (also found in a number of VDL inns) were essential to facilitate such events, but also to cater for a range of regional and local, legal, administrative and political functions. Assizes, inquests, magistrates' sittings, freemasons, and various other societies and specific interest groups, such as agricultural, literary, Puritan, mechanics, education, or water supply, used the assembly rooms for their meetings.

The managerial, networking, communication and social skills, along with the capital backing required of an innkeeper of one of the major trading inns of Georgian England were therefore considerable; and successful, first-tier innkeepers developed a considerable social and political standing, leading to local positions as aldermen or mayor. Inn-keeping dynasties arose, and although they exhibited cohesion and were sustained by inter-marriage, they were nevertheless a minority and did not usually survive beyond a third generation. Also, there was an intra-tier hierarchy, within which one could achieve some advancement, but there was little opportunity for elevation into the next tier, particularly from the third to the second.[39]

This difficulty was probably due to the distinct social strata catered for by the different tiers, and can be demonstrated by the sorts of activities hosted by the lower order inns, such as cock-fighting, prize-fighting, sword-fighting, wrestling, humourous productions, fire-eating displays or 'the learned English Dog', which was literate and numerate, and could answer questions from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*![40] An exact parallel could be shown in VDL, where John Anderson of the *Franklin Hotel* in

[38] Ibid., p. 128.
[39] Ibid., pp. 128-30.
[40] Ibid., p. 118.

Oatlands offered performances of 'TIGHT ROPE DANCING, GYMNASTIC and ACROBATIC FEATS, BY THE SIGNORINAS ANNA and EMILIA … [and] THE DOG MUNITO' who exhibited 'his extraordinary sagacity' by playing a game of dominoes with any person who would challenge him'.[41]

Innkeepers were nevertheless mobile between the counties, and their relocation was usually for self-advancement and often to other inns on the route with which they were already involved. Everitt considered this unsurprising as 'the communications system of the country was essentially based on its inns and operated principally by its innkeepers'.[42] Their relocation advertisements invariably recalled the excellence of their service to former customers, expressed a hope of continued patronage, and assured clientele of the improvements to the establishment undertaken by the new innkeeper. These sentiments, and indeed the form of expression, were exactly matched in similar colonial advertisements, such as that of G.W. Robinson when he relocated from the *Mail Coach Inn*, Lovely Banks to the *Black Snake*.[43]

The scale and size of an inn conferred status, as well as providing for its functional needs. Architecturally, the number of bays on the inn's frontage was usually taken as the visual measure of status and some were described as palatial. The *George* at Sittingbourne was thought to have twenty-one bays;[44] sizeable, regional inns in VDL were usually of five bays, and were architecturally similar to an English rectory, or small manor house: an imported, familiar design.

However, from a practical perspective, it was the number of horses that could be accommodated, which determined the coaching inn's importance. Typical figures in the regional inns, not including those of the first tier, ranged from standings for 20 up to 150 horses. Everitt estimated that Hanoverian Northampton had total stabling for about 3500 horses in its inns, and for 5000 if other smaller enterprises were included.[45] A typical average was 40-50, which was nevertheless still larger than usual for coaching inns on the Main Road in VDL.

---

[41] *Colonial Times*, 7 March 1843, p. 2.
[42] Everitt, *Perspectives in English Urban History*, p. 120.
[43] *Colonial Times*, 9 July 1833, p. 1.
[44] Everitt, *Perspectives in English Urban History*, p. 101.
[45] Ibid., p. 102.

One further group frequenting the inns was the network of highwaymen and footpads, which settled upon the less reputable inns, or rather, those run by the more dishonest innkeepers. A highwayman needed the stabling support provided by the inns, just as did the other travellers upon whom he preyed. The inns also furnished him with the opportunity to identify suitable victims, and a location in which to store and exchange his stolen goods. The preferred locations for holdups were in woodlands or forests; and while waggoneers often travelled in convoy in order to discourage attack, stage-coaches were too few to do likewise and too fast to accompany the waggons.[46]

Thus, although the capital city, county town and 'thoroughfare' inns were a small proportion of the total number of inns, and fulfilled a range of business and social functions many of which were not directly related to the coaching industry, innkeepers nevertheless formed the preponderant body of stage-coach operators. As such, they were an integral and essential part of the industry, within which hierarchies applied to the inns, the innkeepers, their patrons, the stage-coaches and their passengers.

Social class and acceptability governed both the business operators and their customers. One effect of the Industrial Revolution was an increased population with little or no education, which distorted the former social structure in England, but also largely determined the balance and education of the social classes, which were transported or migrated to VDL. These were circumstances which further affected the extent to which the stage-coach industry in the colony could be populated with successful entrepreneurs. However, further levels of business complexity also applied.

In England, carriage of the mail was an essential element in the development of the communication system and its supporting infrastructure, and the logistics base, which supplied the vehicles and horses and maintained their operations. Austen noted that the Post Office was a part of the communication system 'not as a carrier of goods, but as a means of conveying intelligence'.[47] Such intelligence included commercial information, shipping news, bank credit details and paper money, legal documentation, government communications, and newspapers, as well as personal

[46] Ibid., pp. 135-37.
[47] Brian Austen, *British mail-coach services, 1784-1850* (New York, 1986), p. 15.

correspondence; and their carriage demanded speed, economy and security, and schedules which suited the needs of business.

The postal service had three main parts: the external (overseas) mails, the inland mails, and the town mails; and it was carriage of the inland mail, which most affected the development of the stage-coach industry in England as well as in VDL. From the early 17th century, the post was farmed out to postmasters (usually innkeepers) along the mail routes at stages of about 10-12 miles. Post-boys on horseback carried the mail between stages, but there were concerns about the reliability (and drunkenness) of the post-boys, the provision of horses, abuses on the route, accounting malpractices, time taken, and a further lack of security due to attacks upon the post-boys.[48]

However, the increasing volume of mail led to its carriage in carts, whose design was adapted to minimise their vulnerability to robbery. In theory, this should have progressed to its carriage by coach, but despite the introduction of better roads, including through turnpike construction, the stage-coach network was probably still not fast enough to compete with the times achieved by the mail carts. Using Crofts' data, Austen estimated that an average coach speed of 6 mph was not achieved before 1770, and that figure remained relatively constant for the following two decades.[49]

Austen went on to conclude that mail carts were at least as fast and efficient as coaches, but that coaches offered some advantage in terms of cost and security. The cost benefit was, however, only achieved if sufficient passengers could be carried on the route.[50] Therefore, viable economies in the use of stage-coaches were dependent upon load factor, and a cross-subsidy from one part of the business to another. For instance, Robert Nelson of the *Belle Sauvage*, a mail contractor and coach operator with 400 horses, testified that the Norwich road via Newmarket was unviable before the Post Office allowed a higher rate per mile for carriage of the mail.[51]

Carts continued as part of the business mix, as was the case in colonial VDL. The economic and management inter-relationships between different functions in the

---

[48] Ibid., pp. 56-64.
[49] Ibid., p. 75, and note 3.
[50] Ibid., p. 79.
[51] Appendix 16, Evidence of Mr Robert Nelson, 1 April 1835, in House of Commons, *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the Post Office Department*, p. 66.

transport industry, eg stage-coaches, inn-keeping (hospitality), mail carriage and horsing, demonstrated the complexity confronting business success. Stage-coaching as an industry, did not, and probably could not, exist as a stand-alone entity.

A step improvement in the English mail and stage-coach business was brought about in 1784 by John Palmer of Bath. The son of a brewer and operator of a theatre in Bath, Palmer travelled often up to London and had the opportunity to compare the speeds on the route achieved by the stage-coaches versus the mail carts. Palmer proposed to transport passengers and mail in light diligences (a French design of stage-coach) carrying a guard but no outside passengers and to reduce the number of stopping stages, thereby improving both speed and security. His mail coaches were to be exempt from turnpike tolls. He formed a consortium and invested £7000 of his capital, but although he transformed the mail system, his relationship with the government and the Post Office was fraught.[52]

Palmer's concerns about farming the contract, or receiving a salary, and/or a percentage of the profits were moot, but it was personal politics and specifically a charge of insubordination, which proved ultimately destructive. Palmer's association with the Post Office lasted only a little over seven years, but his practical achievements, including route development for the inland mail, and the improvement and standardisation of mail-coach design, were considerable.[53] These practical developments were later exported to the colony, but any lessons from the financial and business relationship difficulties were less heeded and would appear as themes in contractual negotiations involving the VDL government and colonial Post Office.

By the end of the 18th century it was common practice for coach operators to hire their coaches from the coach-builder and to provide only the horses and crew. However, this resulted in poor maintenance and construction, consequent frequent breakdowns, and led to a proposal to standardise mail-coach construction, which was achieved through the adoption, in 1787, of Besant's patent No 1547 for:

> Certain Improvements on Wheel Carriages by means of which they are Less Liable to Overturn, will Follow with Less Draft, go Downhill without distressing the Horses, and have Less Friction on the Axletrees than any now in Use.[54]

---

[52] Austen, *British mail-coach services, 1784-1850*, pp. 81-3.
[53] Ibid., pp. 110-11.
[54] Ibid., p. 219.

Furthermore, operators were induced to contract from Besant, and coach maintenance and cleaning at inns was discontinued and replaced by centralised servicing at Besant's factory. The new design was lighter and more stable, and the wheels less likely to detach. Standardisation of components improved the time taken for repairs on the road, and reduced the number of stock items which had to be held.[55]

The Besant coach, with some modifications such as a change from strap to spring suspension (made possible because of improved road surfaces), single body construction, various outside passenger configurations, larger boots and standardised paintwork, monopolised mail-coach construction from 1787 till 1836. Ownership of Besant transitioned to Parratt & Vidler, but the enterprise was colloquially known as Mr Vidler's Millbank Royal Mail Coach Manufactory, which turned out 36 mail-coaches per annum and had a total stock of over 280 coaches,[56] all of which were leased to contractors. Ultimately, the manufactory also operated 17 provincial depots, with their own workforce, responsible for maintaining about one sixth of the fleet.[57]

The scale of the enterprise was therefore considerable. Vidler employed a workforce of 180 men and boys (apprentices) at Millbank.[58] If not damaged, a coach might last up to 15 years, but seven years was a usual planning figure. Coach bodies were revarnished annually, springs needed regular replacement, and wheels were changed every two to three months. In the 1830s, the capital investment in coaches alone amounted to £15-£20,000.[59] Yet one estimate suggests that in 1836, mail-coaches represented only 8.8 per cent of long distance coaches departing London, and 5.7 per cent of all provincial coaches,[60] making stage-coaches more than 90 per cent of the total coaching industry. This proportion seems to be borne out by the British Parliamentary Inquiry, which showed mail-coach numbers, across a decade, steady at

[55] Ibid., pp. 220-26.
[56] Appendix 12, Evidence of Mr Edward Parratt, 21 December 1827, in House of Commons, *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the Post Office Department*, p. 53.
[57] Appendix 17, Evidence of Mr Finch Vidler, 4 April 1835, in ibid., p. 68.
[58] Appendix 17, Evidence of Mr Finch Vidler, 4 April 1835, in ibid., p. 71.
[59] Austen, *British mail-coach services, 1784-1850*, p. 229.
[60] Bates, cited in ibid., p. 145.

about 290 not including the cross-mail services,[61] and Austen gave the average number of licensed stage-coaches at the time as 2942.[62]

The Commission of Inquiry observed that the usual business arrangement for the provision of coaches was common to both mail and stage-coaches, viz that the carriages were furnished by a contractor, who was paid at a certain rate per mile.[63] The rate was usually set against the double mile, reflecting the practice of using the same team of horses in both directions on a stage, by which means the team could be selected for the conditions of the stage and accustomed to its peculiarities, thereby improving safety on the road and especially at night.

The contractor providing the carriages was almost invariably a coach manufacturer. Stage-coach operator, William Chaplin, believed there was always enough competition between manufacturers to keep the cost of leasing attractive, and though several operators had made the attempt, managing both sides of the business was too onerous.[64] Thus, construction and operations remained separate functions.

Coachbuilders therefore carried the capital risk, as the operators sought only to lease, and not to own, the vehicles. This business arrangement was not adopted in VDL and will be discussed later. With regard to the mail, operators were required to lease the standardised mail-coaches at a rate per double mile from the Millbank Manufactory, which enjoyed considerable security through a monopoly that lasted from 1794 to 1836.[65] It was this persisting monopoly, with the reletting of fourteen-year contracts, which prompted the Commission of Inquiry. However, the operators contracted with the Post Office for a mileage rate on the road, but as this most often was the rate at which they leased the vehicles from the manufactory, operators relied on revenue from passengers in order to make a profit,[66] and therefore carried the commercial and operating risk.

---

[61] MAIL COACHES; POST OFFICE RETURNS, dated 31 March 1835, p. 2, in House of Commons, *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the Post Office Department*.
[62] Austen, *British mail-coach services, 1784-1850*, p. 232.
[63] Second Report, dated 29 April 1835, in Commons, *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the Post Office Department*, p. 3.
[64] Appendix 19, Evidence of Mr William Chaplin, 11 April 1835, in ibid., pp. 78-79.
[65] Appendix 17, Evidence of Mr Finch Vidler, 4 April 1835, in ibid., p. 67.
[66] Second Report, dated 29 April 1835, in ibid., p. 5.

Coachbuilders leasing to the remaining stage-coach operators had no such security. Joseph Wright, who owned 250 coaches with which his contractors covered 20,000 miles per day, never had a written contract. If a party of contractors decided to operate to a certain town, he would provide the vehicles; but if the venture failed, he was left with the coaches (often fitted out to the operator's specific requirements) with less than a month's notice.[67] John Waude, with around 150 coaches, had entered into contracts but had ceased doing so with his established customers as they were 'men of honour', whose word was as good as a written agreement.[68] These customers included Chaplin, and Horne, who was a brother of Wright's partner; longevity and reputation were important in a close and related community, which expected a degree of honourable behaviour. Nevertheless, the coach-builders bore the risk. In combination, these conditions might explain why the business arrangements did not readily translate to the penal colony of VDL.

The capital and ongoing costs were considerable. Vidler put the cost of manufacture of a mail-coach at £145,[69] achieved by building to a standard design; a stage-coach cost around £30 more, due to its more lavish fit-out and bespoke construction. For the mail-coaches, maintenance, cleaning and repair were conducted by the manufacturer at a cost to the Post Office of £2200 pa;[70] stage-coach manufacturers also provided this service, but were not separately recompensed. Mail- and stage-coach operators were liable for any damage caused to their leased vehicles by neglect or accident, but in practice the manufacturer tended to absorb the cost, because it was in his interest to maintain his vehicles in good condition.

Although a coach might last for as long as 15 years, the average life of a mail-coach was around seven, and for a stage-coach, perhaps only five; with repairs and ongoing maintenance, the through-life cost might amount to double that of the original construction.[71] Of course, an accident might result in a total loss. All four mail-coach wheels were interchangeable; nevertheless, Vidler held a stock of around 300 spare sets.[72] Wheel life was dependent upon the weather conditions, which

---

[67] Appendix 15, Evidence of Mr Joseph Wright, 1 April 1835, in ibid., p. 64.
[68] Appendix 18, Evidence of Mr John Waude, 4 April 1835, in ibid., p. 73.
[69] Appendix 17, Evidence of Mr Finch Vidler, 4 April 1835, in ibid., p. 68.
[70] Second Report, dated 29 April 1835, in ibid., p. 3.
[71] Appendix 11, Evidence of Mr Joseph Wright, 20 December 1827, in ibid., p. 52.
[72] Appendix 17, Evidence of Mr Finch Vidler, 4 April 1835, in ibid., p. 68.

adversely affected the woodwork in dry weather and the iron tyres in the wet. Stage-coach wheels were not usually interchangeable between fore and aft. Likewise mail-coaches used a single type of spring and axletree, both components susceptible to failure, but not so the stage-coaches. Thus stock-holding and logistic support for the mail-coach on the road was simpler than for the stage-coach. With improvements in road surfaces, came an increase in speed; but that significantly increased wear and tear.

Technical details of developments in the engineering of all-weather road surfaces, gradients, and bridges, particularly associated with Telford and McAdam, while important, are not germane to this study. However, the associated levying of tolls, which was a factor in England and in VDL, affected the costs of operating coaches. The practical effect of McAdam's improvements was that heavy traffic compacted the road surface, instead of breaking it up as before.[73] Travel was therefore faster, smoother and safer, and the width (and weight) of the wheels and tyres could be reduced.

Some broad planning figures could be assumed. The Commissioners seemed to have fixed on a gross calculation of one coach per 40 miles of route,[74] but operational planning was further refined by season, as well as by day or night. For instance, the route from Bath to London, shorter, but in some ways similar to the Hobart Town-Launceston run, required five coaches: three to do the work, one spare, and one other in case of accident. The spares were held at each end, and the third working vehicle approximately halfway.[75]

Another broad planning figure concerned horses: one horse per mile was required for a fast route. In 1830, horses at £30 each and with a life in service of three years, represented 60-70 per cent of operating costs; feed, shoeing and stabling amounted to 19 shillings per horse, per week.[76] In one year each horse consumed 2.1 tons of oats, 2.9 tons of hay and needed 1.3 tons of straw for bedding; the associated costs were of course seasonally variable.[77] From a colonial perspective, these

---

[73] Thrupp, *The History of Coaches*, p. 114.
[74] Appendix 17, Evidence of Mr Finch Vidler, 4 April 1835, in House of Commons, *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the Post Office Department*, p. 69.
[75] Appendix 12, Evidence of Mr Edward Parratt, 21 December 1827, in ibid., p. 53.
[76] Austen, *British mail-coach services, 1784-1850*, p. 292.
[77] Ibid., p. 274.

planning figures are indicative, but the early agricultural capability of the island to support such a demand would have been a limiting factor, as would the logistic capacity to position it where needed.

The horse population in England in 1813 was estimated at around 1.8 million, requiring both the import and export of horses and fodder. Horse breeding, including for the Cleveland, which was the preferred coach horse, was a subsidiary industry in itself, but which incurred high foal mortality rates.[78] After their employment in stage-coaches, horses were usually sold on for use as carriage horses, thereby offsetting some of the costs, but a sufficient stock of suitable horses in VDL required development from zero. By 1853, Cockburn put the number of horses in the colony at 15,000.[79]

Another necessary, supporting, subsidiary industry was harness-making. The supply of leather, tools, needles, thread and small metalwork was essential, and in 1821 the cost of supplying each harness was £6 per horse.[80] However, the tack needed constant maintenance and repair, and horses also required blacksmiths' and veterinarians' attention. For successful coaching services, all these skills, trades and professions were required in the fledgling colony.

In the late 1830s, coach operator William Chaplin was reported to have a workforce of 2000 to manage a business with 1800 horses, suggesting an English long-distance coaching industry of around 140,000 full or part-time employees. Austin remarked upon the labour-intensive nature of the industry.[81] Taken as another indication, this would suggest the colonial coaching industry would prove to be a significant employer within the VDL economy.

Within each enterprise, a 'company of partners' collectively accounted for the joint costs of coach hire, government duties, staff, booking and financial services, but the costs of provision of horses were an individual responsibility.[82] Taxes and duties were considerable, but were simplified by changing from a licence fee plus mileage

---

[78] F.M.L. Thompson, 'Nineteenth-Century Horse Sense', *The Economic History Review* 29, no. 1 (1976), pp. 76-78.
[79] F.J. Cockburn, *Letters from the southern hemisphere*, (Calcutta?1856), http://nla.gov.au/nla.aus-f8407, p. 113.
[80] Austen, *British mail-coach services, 1784-1850*, p. 276.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid., p. 289.

duty, to a single, higher licence fee. Coachmen's wages amounted to between seven and nine per cent of the total, but although the carriage of letters was a Post Office monopoly, carriage of parcels was a lucrative opportunity. According to coach operator William Horne, in 1829 mail-coaches were unprofitable and only undertaken for the prestige, which might attract extra passengers; the carriage of parcels was a financial necessity.[83]

For the costs of providing horses, a kind of intra-company clearing house, conducted by the principal contractor in London, was used to apportion earnings according to a rate per mile. The principal contractor usually horsed the coaches for the early stages departing London and then sub-contracted for the remainder of the route. Following the financial failure of one mail-coach operation in 1837, the Post Office expressed an opinion that earnings per mile should be at least £3 10s in each four-week period, to make a small profit; commercial operators put this figure somewhat higher.[84] Given the high rate of insolvency among stage-coach operators in VDL, a similar colonial cost-benefit estimate would be instructive.

There was difficulty in finding partners to horse the mails within 50 miles of London, as no refreshments were provided, and therefore the prime contractor was not able to offer the horsing inn-keeper the inducement of collateral business. This reluctance also applied to mail services in the middle of the night, when there was usually no alternative location available to passengers.[85] This commercial difficulty also applied to the colonial Hobart Town-Launceston night mails.

Another colonial parallel existed in the attitudes of the respective Post Office bureaucracies. The Superintendent of Mail-coaches stated to the Commissioners that it was 'essential that the contract get into good hands; if there should be any failure it will be attributed to the Post-office'.[86] The Post-master General, Sir Francis Feeling, 'recollecting the great importance of the service' reminded the Commissioners of the importance of keeping the supply of the mail-coaches 'in some degree … under the

---

[83] Ibid., p. 298.
[84] Ibid., p. 299.
[85] Appendix 19, Evidence of Mr William Chaplin, 11 April 1835, in House of Commons, *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the Post Office Department*, p. 79.
[86] Appendix 20, Evidence of George Louis, Esq., 1 June 1835, in ibid., p. 80.

immediate superintendence of the Post-office Department'.[87] In VDL there was a similar bureaucratic concern that accepting a lowest tender might result in a failure to provide the required service, with consequent public anger.

There did not appear to be a specific definition of a stage-coach within the body of English law. A regulating Act of 1788 had referred to a 'coach, chaise or other carriage of a like sort, going or travelling for hire'.[88] That definition was further addressed in an amending Act of 1790, which discriminated between those 'drawn by three or more horses, and going or travelling for hire … [and those] drawn by less than three horses'.[89] Thus 'travelling for hire' seemed to be the most defining requirement. In the interest of safety, the Acts limited the number of passengers to be carried on the roof and made the driver liable for enforcing the limit.

However, given the potential top-heaviness which might be caused by loading passengers outside but not inside, an amending Bill addressed the question of bringing outside passengers into the body, which the coach operator would have wished to do to improve safety by lowering the centre of gravity. Under the amendment, an outside passenger was permitted to travel inside with the agreement of at least one inside passenger, next to whom he or she must sit.[90] Of course, such a provision had practical, financial, and social hierarchical considerations. Also to reduce the risk of overturning, the Bill imposed design limitations on vehicle height and track-width, and imposed further limitations with regard to the size and loading of luggage.

Enforcement of the provisions was problematic. The penalties for noncompliance in the Bill were strict and complex, and passengers bore some responsibility. Any passenger travelling upon the luggage was liable to a fine, and any properly booked passenger was given the right to call upon a collector of tolls to

---

[87] Appendix 24, Letter, Sir Francis Feeling, GPO, 29 May 1835, in ibid., p. 84.
[88] 'An act for limiting the number of persons to be carried on the outside of stage coaches or other carriages', in *28, George III, c. 57*, ed. The Parliament of Great Britain (1788), Preamble.
[89] 'An act to alter, explain and amend an act, made in the twenty-eighth year of the reign of his prefent Majesty, intituled, An act for limiting the number of perfons to be carried on the outfide of ftage coaches or other carriages, and for regulating the conduct of the drivers and guards thereof', in *30, George III, c. 36*, The Parliament of Great Britain (1790), Preamble.
[90] House of Commons, 'A Bill… for limiting the number of Persons to be carried on the Outside of Stage Coaches or other Carriages, and for other Purposes relating thereto', in *Cockton 1810 (287) I.463 mf 11.5* (1810).

count the passengers or measure the height of the luggage.[91] Such a measure was not applicable in VDL until tollgates were introduced.

Mail-coaches were exempted from a requirement to paint license details on the outside of each door, but other coach operators were to have the names of 'the Person or Persons, or the Company of Proprietors or Firm' displayed so as to enable them to be identified.[92] The Royal Mail coaches needed no such identification. An insertion into the Bill called for the sign of an inn, which had any ownership in the vehicle, to be also painted on the side of the coach.[93] Drivers were to ensure the control of the horses before quitting the box, and were also made responsible for some specifically Post Office duties,[94] which in the colonial case, were covered in the Post Office Acts.

Twenty-six years separated the enactment of the British Bill from the passage of the VDL *Stage Coach Act (1836),*[95] and in that time a number of minor amendments were made. The first of these addressed 'inconsiderate driving', particularly the racing of stage-coaches. Drivers were not to 'commence or enter into any race or contest in speed with or against any other Carriage whatsoever, or against time'.[96] The VDL Act prohibited racing, but did not define it.

Next, the culpable misbehaviour of stage-coach drivers, which resulted in accident and injury, was declared a criminal misdemeanour punishable by fine and imprisonment.[97] This provision was included in the VDL *Stage Coach Act (1836)* but not in that of NSW,[98] perhaps suggesting that the VDL legislature was more

---

[91] Ibid., p. 3 and p. 7.
[92] Ibid., p. 4.
[93] Ibid., p. 9.
[94] Ibid., p. 6.
[95] His Excellency Colonel George Arthur Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for the Regulation of Stage Coaches', in *6 William IV No 12 (1836)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1836).
[96] House of Commons, 'A Bill for the more effectual Prevention of the Mischief occasioned by the inconsiderate driving of Stage Coaches, and other Public Conveyances', in *Cockton 1816 (461) II.749 mf 17.8* (1816), p. 2.
[97] House of Commons, 'A Bill for punishing criminally Drivers of Stage Coaches and Carriages, for Accidents occasioned by their Negligence or Misconduct', in *Cockton 1820 (59) I.23 mf 22.1* (1820).
[98] The Governor of New South Wales and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for regulating Stage Carriages in New South Wales', in *6 William IV No 2 (1835) (NSW)*, Colonial Government of New South Wales (Sydney, 1835).

influenced by (and aware of?) British, rather than NSW, legislation. In fact, NSW did not declare reckless and dangerous driving a misdemeanour until 1849.[99]

The next amendment recognised that ownership in a stage-coach might be vested in several proprietors along the route, and that as a consequence, it was difficult to determine where summonses etc should be served against the proprietors. The Act declared that the owner or proprietor residing closest to the location of the infringement should be the responsible representative of the company.[100] This situation, driven by county jurisdictions and the ease of availability of witnesses, was largely inapplicable to the VDL situation and was not included in either the VDL or NSW Acts, but serves as another example of the complex business and legal arrangements along a line of route.

An administrative Bill introduced an innovation familiar to modern road users, namely license plates. These were to be affixed to the vehicle, which was thereby licensed to operate only on the declared route.[101] The ensuing Act did not only apply to four-horse stage-coaches, but to any person(s) licensed 'to keep, use, employ and let out for hire, any carriage or vehicle' described therein.[102] Carriages plying for hire without license plates could be seized, along with their horses, but license plates were not adopted in the colonial Acts, perhaps due to cost/benefit considerations and a lack of local economies of scale.

Before the two colonial Acts were passed, a Bill was introduced to amend the 1810 (*50, Geo III, c. 48*) British Act, because it had failed to prevent accidents caused by overloading or dangerous driving.[103] The amendment: imposed a new limitation on

---

[99] The Governor of New South Wales and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for punishing criminally Drivers of Stage Coaches and Carriages for accidents occasioned by their wilful misconduct', in *13 Victoria No 5 (1849) (NSW)*, Colonial Government of New South Wales (Sydney, 1849).
[100] House of Commons, 'A Bill to amend an Act of the 50th Year of his late Majesty relating to Stage Coaches, and the Power to select for Prosecution the Proprietors of such Stage Coaches, in certain cases', in *Cockton 1822 (434) III.1687 mf 24.18* (1822).
[101] House of Commons, 'A Bill to make further Regulations relating to the Licensing of Stage Coaches', in *Cockton 1826 (271) II.23 mf 28.8* (1826).
[102] Ibid., p. 5.
[103] House of Commons, 'A Bill to amend an Act of the Fiftieth year of King George the Third, for regulating Stage Coaches, and for the more effectual promoting the Safety of Passengers by Stage Coaches', in *Cockton 1830-31 (70) II.369 mf 33.11* (1830), Preamble.

the absolute height of luggage from the ground; empowered passengers to demand the driver of a stage coach to lock, or drag, a wheel while descending any hill; and required the fitting of a belt, or fastening, inside the coach to enable passengers to secure the doors.[104]

The amendments thus regulated a limit, enforced an operational safety procedure, and directed a safety fitment for vehicles. However, these government directions, which exactly reflect modern, risk management mechanisms (regulate, change behaviours, modify equipment), were not incorporated by the colonial governments into their respective stage coach Acts, perhaps because the colonial governments were less interventionist in commercial activities than their British counterparts were becoming.

Although reliable population statistics are not readily available,[105] the population of Great Britain in 1811 was around 15 million, rising to 27 million by 1851.[106] The population of VDL in 1835 was 35,250.[107] Therefore, despite the many similarities between the English and colonial approaches, the main difference was one of scale.

From a social hierarchy perspective, English society was developed around the leadership of the squires, which had limited replication in penal VDL. In the case of the English stage-coach enterprises, none of the entrepreneurs, innkeepers or their employees seem to have warranted, or recorded, any account. They were a group of small, medium and large business operators, who nevertheless fell below the level of interest accorded the landed or leisured classes, but above the social concern afforded the poor and criminal classes. They were probably too busy to record their experiences in diaries, and became a stratum of society whose important services were only coincidentally mentioned, such as in Mrs Gaskell's account of the mail coach snowed-in at the inn on Blackstone Edge,[108] but who were otherwise invisible.

---

[104] Ibid., pp. 1-2.
[105] M. Briggs and P. Jordan, *Economic History of England* (London, 1967), p. 196.
[106] D.G. Perry, *A Social and Economic History Notebook 1750-1960* (London, 1965), p. 4 and p. 9.
[107] James Ross, *Hobart Town Almanack and Van Diemen's Land Annual for 1835* (Hobart Town, 1835), p. 47.
[108] Mrs Gaskell, *The Life of Charlotte Bronte* (London, 1885), p. 14.

Would colonial stage-coach entrepreneurs suffer the same invisibility as their English counterparts?

In examining the British influence upon coaching in VDL, timing was an important factor. Stage-coaching in England only reached maturity by 1800, and peaked in the 1830s. Although in its infancy, the colony was developing at the same time and was therefore well placed to take almost immediate advantage of the British experience.

While the older social structure had influenced the business and passenger hierarchies, which governed the inn-keeping and coach operating enterprises, it was the formulation of accepted practice and experience into English law, which could be most readily taken up in the colony.

The British experience in developing the inland mail from horse messengers, through mail carts to mail-coaches, and the associated contracting arrangements for the construction of mail-coaches and the horsing of the routes was again timely from a colonial perspective. Although the mail represented only about nine per cent of British stage-coaching, its ability to subsidise otherwise unprofitable routes had been shown. In VDL, with a much smaller passenger market, would the Post Office subsidy be, proportionally, a much more important commercial buffer?

The stage-coach industry was not a stand-alone entity, but a highly complex series of mutually dependent functions. Successful entrepreneurs, not infrequently women, were those who could develop flexible business networks, manage risk and complexity, ensure financial viability, often through cross-subsidies, and position the business within the social hierarchy. These requirements called for a mature level of business acumen, which perhaps few in the colony would initially possess.

As a labour intensive, service industry with huge demands for supporting horses, fodder, and sundry equipment, stage-coaching represented a significant proportion of the national workforce, was a consumer and supplier, and both an importer and exporter. However, the number of inns dedicated to stage-coaches was limited to the better establishments, and was a quite small proportion of the total, as was the proportion of passengers travelling, relative to the total population. How important would questions of scale and proportionality be in a newly developing

colony, where spare capacity was less available to cushion any threats to demand or supply?

Regardless of scale, the business complexity was the same, and so the coaching entrepreneurs of VDL would require similar business acumen, but a smaller population base and more limited skill sets would make achieving success more difficult. Additionally, there was a lesser degree of trust within and between colonial business networks. Finally, despite making significant contributions to British social fabric, the stage-coach entrepreneurs seemed to be historiographically unnoticed, which was also the case in the colony.

PART 1 – ORIGINS

CHAPTER 2

… IN A COLONIAL SETTING

The island of VDL, later Tasmania, covers '26,215 square miles – almost the same size as Ceylon and a little smaller than Ireland'.[1] It is mountainous, with little land close to sea level and one main inland plain, where burning by Aborigines had modified the landscape, which consequently was well suited for sheep pasture. The soils are not especially fertile, but many areas are well watered. Therefore, land cleared for farming was limited to some areas between the two main centres of population, with some also along the north coast. These areas were where early settlement was concentrated,[2] probably amount to little more than one-third of the landmass, and represent a pattern which has endured. These were the catchment areas for the coaching ventures, other than when encouraged by later developments in the mining industry.

Geoffrey Blainey considered 'distance a central factor in Australia's history' and also that distance and transport provided mirrors to reflect economic and social development and to explain some of Australia's more masculine and egalitarian tendencies.[3] Yet some of the broader Australian factors were not directly applicable to the island of Tasmania. Certainly the strategic circumstances of an island off a continent at the far side of the world before the advent of steam-powered ships produced common concerns; but settlers in VDL did not, for instance, suffer a similar long inability to break out from the bridgehead, which confronted their compatriots in NSW as they attempted to penetrate the Blue Mountains. Tasmania's size is considerable, but relatively small by comparison with the mainland; Belich

---

[1] *Atlas of Tasmania*, (Hobart, 1965), p. 1.
[2] Ibid., pp. 19-45.
[3] Geoffrey Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance shaped Australia's History*, Revised edition ed. (Melbourne, 1982), Preface.

considered it 'small – a quarter the size of Britain or New Zealand'.[4] Thus the island paralleled many mainland difficulties, but any acceptance of the applicability of the general Australian condition should be tempered with caution. Tasmania was, and is, somewhat different.

Blainey's notion of the taming of distance might be seen as the product of a time-speed-distance equation or conundrum. While distance is fixed, time is simultaneously finite and infinite. Thus at one end of the spectrum, speed during travel can reduce the absolute, measurable time taken, affecting transport schedules and perceived distance; while at the other extreme is the notion of a world without end. Somewhere between the extremes was the ground occupied in VDL/Tasmania over the course of a century by change and development, which improved travel accessibility and reduced the time required for a journey. Conceptually, across the 19th century the nature of some local time was modified as opportunities for leisure time levelled social hierarchies and expanded the market for passenger transport services.[5]

This chapter will therefore examine the physical, demographic, social, economic and technical factors, which affected the establishment of the early penal colony and its subsequent development. The second part of the chapter will address the measures introduced to regulate the settlement of the colony.

2A – Settlement and Economic Development

Stage-coaching in England had reached maturity by 1800, and peaked in the 1830s. During that short time, developments in VDL ranged from making a decision to occupy the island, through to a condition of somewhat stable settlement. Regardless of whether the strategic purpose of occupation was to deter the French, dispose of convicts, establish a settler society, safeguard British whaling interests, provide strategic bases, or to develop markets, the initial, immediate, British concern was to provide a presence in the recently proven Bass Strait.

---

[4] James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: the Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-world, 1783-1939* (New York, 2009), p. 267.
[5] Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918* (Cambridge Massachusetts, 1983), p. 315.

Fig 2.1 – Map of Van Diemen's Land, 1825

Although Philip Gidley King, the Governor of NSW, had recommended a settlement at Port Phillip[6] and David Collins had been appointed to establish the proposed settlement (with some leeway regarding final choice of location),[7] when King was informed of a French intention to settle in VDL,[8] he immediately warned off the French and sent Lieutenant John Bowen, RN, to settle the Derwent.[9] Meanwhile, Collins reported Port Phillip unsuitable, and although acknowledging Port Dalrymple was 'upon the whole favourable,'[10] he nevertheless chose to relocate to the Derwent.[11]

Thus, two expeditions collocated on the Derwent, but there was no presence in Bass Strait. Accordingly, King was instructed to remove part of the Norfolk Island settlement to Port Dalrymple,[12] and to send Lieutenant-Colonel Paterson to administer 'the government of that new colony'.[13] Therefore, the island became the setting for two colonies, and King declared the 42nd parallel as the dividing line between the northern county of Cornwall, and the southern county of Buckinghamshire.[14] This administrative duality was not swiftly resolved, produced separate development, at different rates, introduced unnecessary distance and communications difficulties, and bequeathed a sense of north-south difference.

However, the need for scheduled passenger transport did not emerge first between the island's two centres of government, but between the developing centres of population. Before that time, alternative, private travel arrangements were facilitated. In Hobart Town, a transport industry began to develop. In 1822, Robert Mather advertised imported vehicles and equipment for sale,[15] and a horse transport

---

[6] Governor King to the Duke of Portland, 21st May 1802, in *Historical Records of New South Wales*, ed. F.M. Bladen (Sydney, 1893), HRNSW IV, p. 766.
[7] Lord Hobart to Lieutenant-Governor Collins, 7th February 1803, in ibid., HRNSW V, p. 20.
[8] Governor King to Lieut.-Colonel Paterson, (King Papers), 18th November 1802, in ibid., HRNSW IV, p. 1006.
[9] Government and General Order, 29th March 1803, in ibid., HRNSW V, p. 80.
[10] Lieutenant-Governor Collins to Governor King, 27th January 1804, in ibid., HRNSW V, p. 303.
[11] Lieutenant-Governor Collins to Governor King, 28th February 1804, in ibid., HRNSW V, p. 312.
[12] Lord Hobart to Governor King, 24th June 1803, in ibid., HRNSW V, pp. 157-58.
[13] Ibid., p. 159.
[14] Government and General Order, 24th September 1804, in ibid., HRNSW V, p. 468.
[15] *Hobart Town Gazette and Van Diemen's Land Advertiser*, 14 September 1822, p. 2.

support base developed around the appropriately named *Coach and Horses* public house in Elizabeth Street. James Crisp relocated to the stables there in order to conduct his veterinarian practice, trade as a horse dealer, and hire out saddle horses and gigs.[16] Robert M'Guire operated the livery stables at the inn.[17]

Ferries were an early requirement and became staging and coordinating points. In 1811, Governor Macquarie went up-river in a boat from Hobart Town to Herdsman's Cove, but ten years later, during his second visit, his party 'breakfasted at Austin's, and crossed the ferry immediately afterwards'.[18] Macquarie's statement highlighted the early integration of ferries and inns into the colonial communication system. In 1824, Edward Curr crossed the Derwent via the Roseneath ferry to Old Beach.[19]

The main Derwent crossings for those travelling to or from the north were from Baltonsborough Place (renamed Roseneath by Macquarie)[20] to Old Beach; from Stony Point to Cove Point; and from the Black Snake to Green Point. As shown in fig 2.2, the latter two routes operated flexibly to the destinations on the north bank. Official toll rates were established for the ferries by 1824.[21]

---

[16] Ibid., 17 December 1824, p. 4.
[17] *Colonial Times and Tasmanian Advertiser*, 16 June 1826, p. 1.
[18] Lachlan Macquarie and Phyllis Mander-Jones, *Lachlan Macquarie, Governor of New South Wales : journals of his tours in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land 1810-1822* (Sydney, 1956), p. 62 and p. 180.
[19] Edward Curr and T.E. Wells, *An Account of the colony of Van Diemen's Land principally designed for the use of emigrants* (London, 1824), pp. 12-13.
[20] Joseph Lycett, *Views in Australia or New South Wales & Van Diemen's Land delineated: in fifty views, with descriptive letter press* (Melbourne, [facsimile of 1824 original], 1971), facing Roseneath Ferry illustration.
[21] Andrew Bent, ed. *The Van Diemen's Land Pocket Almanack...* (Hobart Town, 1824), p. 51.

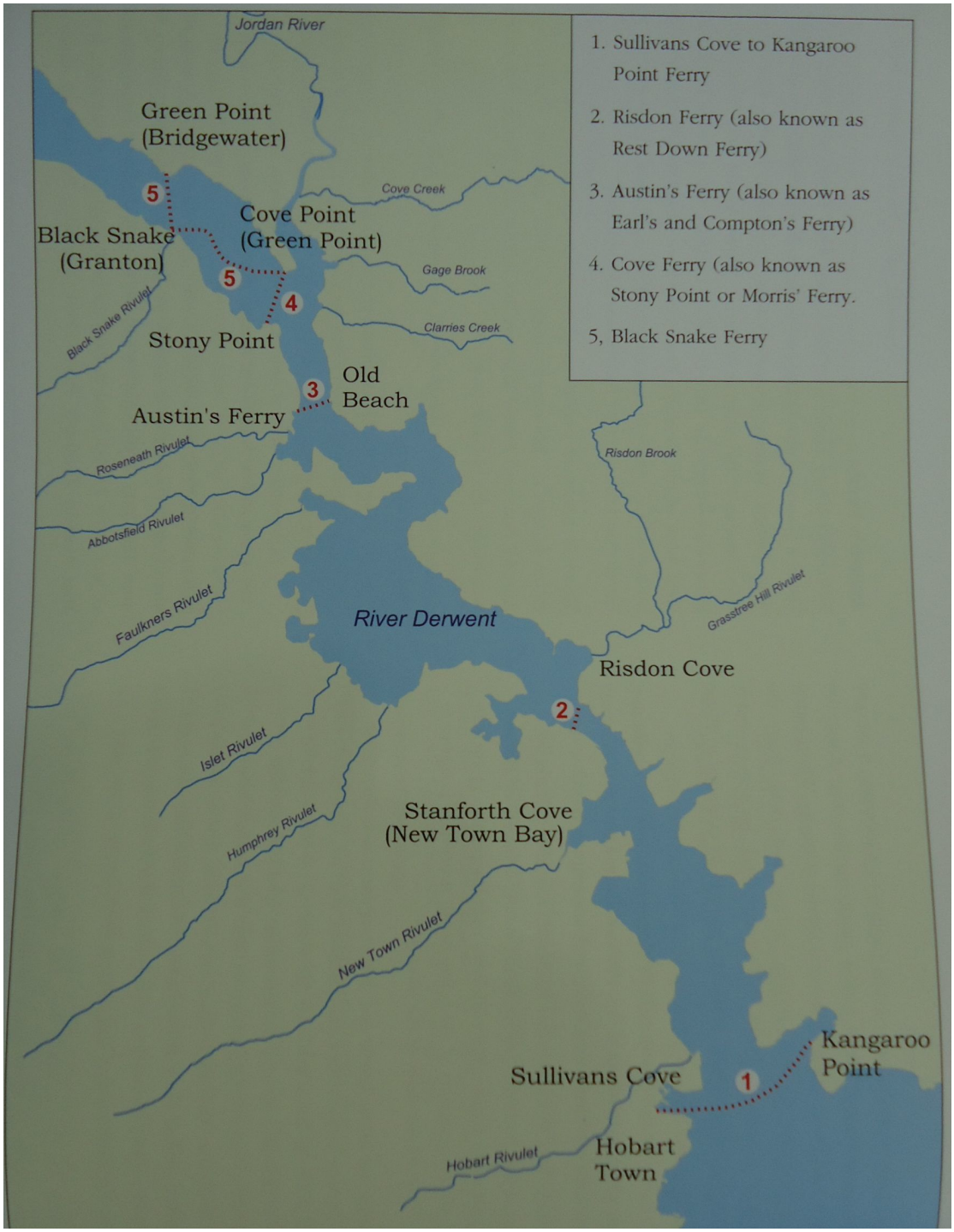


Fig 2.2 –River Derwent Ferry Crossings, John Thompson (2004)[22]

In the north, albeit later than in the south, ferries across the South Esk became transport focal points. In 1830, Henry Clayton established a ferry, in conjunction with

[22] John Thompson, *A road in Van Diemen's Land : the story of convict-built "Bell's Line of Road" from the Derwent River to St Peter's Pass, 1820-1824* (Hobart, 2004), Map 1.

his *Norfolk Arms Inn,* at Norfolk Plains.[23] The alternative crossing point was by the punt at Perth, which Richard Heaney, of the *Perth Inn,* was operating in 1832, having rented it from the Government.[24] Heaney guaranteed the availability of the punt on the Hobart side even through the night, and was required to carry official passengers free of charge. Therefore, the Perth location was the preferred crossing for Government traffic, including the mail.

At this point it is useful to consider road construction with a 'lead or follow' perspective. From a policy view, Noel Butlin mentioned two enduring factors as drivers of colonial economic activity: staple development and the employment of migrant labour.[25] James Belich discussed the 'push or pull' factors usually associated with mass migration and the lure of land ownership.[26] These were some of the causes of the increasing need for transport and communications services with their supporting infrastructure, which the colonial government had to manage, either proactively or reactively.

Thus in 1824, Lieutenant-Governor Sorell stated that his 'attention to opening communications' was prompted by 'the commencement of the Emigration'; that is, settlement prompted road construction. His priorities were 'to the Districts first in order of Settlement; a Road to New Norfolk … from Hobart Town to Coal River and Pitwater … from Hobart Town to Launceston with good ferries and bridges … [and] a branch to the Clyde'; in the north, he mentioned the road from the ferry over the South Esk to Launceston.[27] These priorities endured. Lieutenant-Governor George Arthur reported that considerable progress had been made in road construction, and was particularly pleased with the use of convict labour in the undertaking.[28] Nevertheless, in 1827, the 'best line of road across the Island' was still being

---

[23] *Launceston Advertiser*, 31 May 1830, p. 1.
[24] *The Independent*, 25 August 1832, p. 1.
[25] N.G. Butlin, *Forming a Colonial Economy, Australia 1810-1850* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 5-6.
[26] Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: the Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-world, 1783-1939*, pp. 128-32.
[27] Lieutenant-Colonel Sorrel to Lieutenant-Governor Arthur dated 22 May 1824, in Frederick Watson, *Historical Records of Australia. Series III., Despatches and papers relating to the settlement of the states* (Sydney, 1921), Vol IV, pp. 147-48.
[28] Arthur to Bathurst, dated 24 March 1827, in ibid., Vol V, p. 706.

determined.[29] In 1830, Augustus Prinsep had the choice of two roads north from Oatlands and opted for the new road only to discover it was unfinished. He became lost and had to turn east to find the old road.[30]

Much detailed work on roads and bridges is available especially in Newitt,[31] but also in Thompson[32] and so is not repeated here; but the significant points for coaching were that military and government purposes in road construction centred upon speed of communication, usually resulting in straight-line constructions; whereas stage-coaches required more attention to be given to gradient. Road development and maintenance were government responsibilities, the coaching concerns did not build their own turnpikes, and priorities were set by government, but were influenced by market forces and popular demand. For example, the *Colonial Times* considered that repair to the New Norfolk road was 'the least that can be expected from the Government'.[33] Indeed, editorials and letters to the press were often scathing: 'more maledictions were heaped on Mr. O'Connor [the former Inspector of Roads] by travellers than prayers were said in the whole Colony'![34]

John Batman's return journey from Launceston to Hobart Town on horseback in 1830 was an example of how a journey was made independently, calling at wayside inns, or staying with friends for food and accommodation and taking about five days for the round trip. Batman's mention of Mr Hooper's house at Spring Hill being 'surrounded by natives',[35] was a reminder of the dangers faced by travellers up to that time; although by that date, the description was probably exaggerated.

The early period of settlement might therefore be described as an ill-disciplined struggle for survival in two footholds, characterised by foraging and

---

[29] Acting Surveyor-General Dumaresq to Colonial Secretary Burnett dated 28 February 1827, in ibid., Vol VI, p. 10.
[30] Letter VII, dated Newtown 10 March 1830, in Mrs Augustus Prinsep, *Illustrations of Prinsep's Journal of a voyage from Calcutta to Van Diemen's Land : from original sketches taken during the years 1829 and 1830* (London, 1833), pp. 88-90.
[31] Lyn Newitt, Alan Jones, and Tasmanian Department of Main Roads Historical Committee, *Convicts & carriageways: Tasmanian road development until 1880* (Hobart, 1988), passim.
[32] Thompson, *A road in Van Diemen's Land : the story of convict-built "Bell's Line of Road" from the Derwent River to St Peter's Pass, 1820-1824*, op cit.
[33] *Colonial Times*, 4 April 1832, p. 2.
[34] Ibid., 21 June 1836, p. 6.
[35] John Batman, 'Diary of John Batman', in *Dixson Library* (State Library of New South Wales, 1830), 22-27 August 1830.

shepherding outwards, during which competition developed with the Aborigines for food, and convicts gained a good knowledge of the local terrain. Early additional settlers were brought from Norfolk Island to the New Norfolk district in the south, and to the Norfolk Plains area in the north;[36] but Commissioner Bigge noted that outside the three main settlements (which included George Town) only one township, Elizabeth Town (New Norfolk), had been declared and that in 1820 it consisted of just two houses.[37]

However, from the early 1820s, free settlers arrived from Britain in greater numbers and occupied the best agricultural land resulting in conflict with the Aborigines. The new arrivals were better financed and connected with the old country than their predecessors and introduced or demanded a range of services and government reforms.[38] 1830 was a tipping point in VDL: before that date, convictism had been a key determinant; after that time the demographic mix began to change quickly. [39] Also, after the 1830 Black Line campaign, protection 'became progressively less important as Aboriginal risks were diminished',[40] although a threat from bushrangers remained.

Before 1830, the settled population was sufficient to sustain passenger transport services only within about 30 miles of Hobart Town and Launceston, much as early English coaches had been limited to within 30 miles of London. These settled areas were relatively secure. After the Black Line campaign, increasing settler numbers developed a market for longer distance travel and potential travellers had a greater confidence of safe passage, which reduced the business risk and prompted ventures into transport enterprises.

However, the market was still small. Bigge placed the total white population of VDL in 1820 (including 1020 children) at 5468, of whom 2588 had arrived as convicts.[41] No indication of distribution was given, but the number of women on the

---

[36] John Thomas Bigge, *Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry, on the state of agriculture and trade in the colony of New South Wales*, (1823), pp. 25-27.
[37] Ibid., p. 45.
[38] Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: the Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-world, 1783-1939*, pp. 268-69.
[39] Butlin, *Forming a Colonial Economy, Australia 1810-1850*, p. 4.
[40] Ibid., p. 154.
[41] Bigge, *Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry, on the state of agriculture and trade in the colony of New South Wales*, p. 80.

Derwent was about three times that at Port Dalrymple; and although Hartwell noted the unreliability of population figures before the first census in 1842,[42] some breakdown of available statistics is necessary to understand the development and locales of passenger transport demand.

By 1 January 1829, broad figures placed the total population at 20,000 of whom 5700 were in Hobart Town, 1000 in Launceston, and 13,000 in the townships and settled districts.[43] These figures included convicts, who were not likely fare-paying passengers and should not be reckoned in any potential market estimation. The northern population centre still lagged its southern counterpart, but the bulk of the population was outside the main towns. Again, there was no useful indication of distribution, but in 1820, Bigge had noted the suitability of land from the upper Derwent between the Clyde and Shannon rivers for the next wave of settlers.[44]

Statistics for 1 January 1835 are more informative and enable a breakdown of the free population: that of Hobart Town being 9855, and of Launceston, 3193.[45] In the south, the Richmond (including Sorell) district had 2060 free settlers and Brighton 1031, amounting to almost 3100 potential passengers inbound to Hobart Town from that area. New Norfolk (886), Hamilton (472) and Bothwell (569) together amounted to almost 2000 inbound passengers via the Derwent and upper Derwent valley. In the north there was less scope for en route supplementation and still relatively small catchments: Norfolk Plains (to the south of Launceston) had 676 free settlers, George Town (to the north) 156, and Westbury (west) only 148.[46]

The 1848 census showed the total population had increased to 70,164 and provided a better indication of the distribution in the settled districts.[47] North and south of the island had sizeable populations proximate to the two main towns to

---

[42] R.M. Hartwell, *The economic development of Van Diemen's Land : 1820-1850* (Carlton, Vic., 1954), Table 2, note (d), p. 68.
[43] James Ross, *The Hobart Town Almanack, for the Year 1829. With six copper plate engravings*, (Hobart-Town, 1829), p. 157.
[44] Bigge, *Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry, on the state of agriculture and trade in the colony of New South Wales*, pp. 30-31.
[45] James Ross, *Hobart Town Almanack and Van Diemen's Land Annual for 1835*, (Hobart Town, 1835), p. 47.
[46] Ibid., p47.
[47] Van Diemen's Land Census of the Year 1848, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, following p. 295.

provide demand for passenger transport services, and the population in the midlands might augment demand on the route between the two centres.[48]

However, if population location was a determinant, other factors operated as constraints. While the Richmond district presented potentially the largest passenger demand, there were options on the route via the several ferries already mentioned, or via a ferry from Kangaroo Point direct to Hobart Town; and in the case of the Sorell area, there were several options for crossing the Pitt Water, or alternatively sea transport could be used for the whole journey. In the case of George Town, water transport remained the prime means of travelling to Launceston until a suitable road was developed. Therefore, the upper Derwent catchment, via New Norfolk presented the largest, early population centre with no suitable alternative route to Hobart Town. From the ferries, the Brighton district, with its associated catchment, also swelled passenger numbers on the route.

However, if population drove the potential passenger market, affordability was a constraint. In June 1844, fares on the Main Road were £3 inside and £2 outside;[49] indicative wages for artisans were £60pa and for a female cook, £15-20pa.[50] Thus an outside fare between the two towns amounted to ten per cent or more of the cook's annual wage and would have been a difficult sum to find; but many passengers would not have been self-funding.

For example, in 1845, 'in consequence of the difficulty … in compelling prisoners to walk', the government hired a coach to transfer prisoners from Launceston to Hobart Town.[51] A notorious female prisoner, 'Jemmy the Rover', absconded from a coach when she was being transferred without any police escort.[52] Despite the potential trouble, government warrants for the transfer of prisoners were lucrative and actively sought. In 1846, six prisoners who had been sentenced to death,

---

[48] In the south, Hobart Town had 16,112 free settlers, Richmond 3711, New Norfolk 1521, and Brighton 1734. In the north, Launceston had 7854 free inhabitants, Norfolk Plains 2359, Westbury 1145, and George Town 431. In the midlands, the Campbell Town district had 1394 free settlers and Oatlands 931; and in the Upper Derwent/Clyde area Hamilton had 872 and Bothwell 632 free settlers.
[49] *Colonial Times*, 19 June 1844, p. 1.
[50] SYNOPSIS OF THE RETURNS OF RATES AND WAGES… AUGUST, 1844, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 24 September 1844, pp. 1171-72.
[51] REMOVAL OF PRISONERS, in *Launceston Examiner*, 2 August 1845, p. 3.
[52] HARBORING, in ibid., 20 December 1848, p. 5.

travelled from Launceston to Hobart Town en route to Norfolk Island *per* one enterprise and six others by the opposition coach.[53]

Prisoners were not the only passengers carried by the stage-coaches for the government. The commissariat requested annual tenders for the carriage of officials, and also for the conveyance of invalids.[54] Government officials travelling included Mr Justice Montagu,[55] and Captain Cheyne (the Director of Public Works) who fractured his leg in a coach accident.[56] Rank did not necessarily confer extra privileges and after his arrival in Launceston the Administrator, His Excellency Mr La Trobe, continued his journey to Hobart Town by the *Royal Mail* coach.[57] His family used the same means.[58]

Commercial enterprises also availed themselves of the stage-coach services. For example, Mr Cameron's theatre company travelled to Hobart Town by coach when the Launceston season closed,[59] and Mrs Warham's female domestic servant agency despatched unaccompanied, young women to country clients by coach.[60] Some passengers were quasi-officials. The Reverends John West and S. Hewlett were passengers in a coach, which was involved in a terrible crash coming down the Cocked Hat hill;[61] John West was the only passenger unharmed.

Legislative Councillor, Thomas Archer, was travelling by a coach, which was delayed for a day because the ferry could not cross the river.[62] A correspondent, 'Nehemiah Zwartback' travelled from Hobart Town to Launceston in 1837 and during the return described two of his fellow travellers as honourable members 'for the

---

[53] Removal of Prisoners, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 24 January 1846, p. 67.
[54] CONVEYANCE BY COACH, and TENDERS, in *Launceston Examiner*, 22 January 1848, p. 6. and 9 January 1850, p. 5
[55] *Launceston Courier*, 12 April 1841, p. 2.
[56] MAIL ACCIDENT (Launceston Advertiser, July 26), in *Colonial Times*, 30 July 1844, p. 3.
[57] ARRIVAL OF MR. LA TROBE, THE ACTING-GOVERNOR OF VAN DIEMEN'S LAND, in *Launceston Advertiser*, 12 October 1846, p. 2.
[58] *Launceston Examiner*, 14 October 1846, p. 2.
[59] THE THEATRE, in *Launceston Advertiser*, 11 December 1834, p. 3.
[60] GENERAL AGENCY OFFICE, MRS WARHAM, in *Launceston Examiner*, 31 January 1849, p. 2.
[61] COACH ACCIDENT, in ibid., 11 April 1849, p. 6.
[62] To the Editor of the Colonial Times, 'SPEEDY PASSAGE', in *Colonial Times*, 25 October 1836, p. 6.

county of Cornwall … [and] for the rotten borough of Oatlands'.[63] Thus the politicians of the day relied upon the coaches for transport to the capital when the Council was sitting.

'Zwartback', described his fellow inside passengers as follows:

> I was jumbled cheek by jole with the descendant of Irish kings, with a prisoner of the crown, and with a man just obtained his ticket!-and really, barring the lady being a prisoner, and the ticket gentleman having been one, they were both very pleasant companions.[64]

'Nehemiah Zwartback'[65] was presumably a newspaper construct to situate a satirical discourse but Irish political exile, T.F. O'Meagher was more certainly attributable. He was taken straight from his transport ship to the hotel to board the coach in full darkness for his journey into the interior.[66]

With a developing economy and increasing leisure time some passengers, (unlike O'Meagher) travelled purely for tourism, social or recreational purposes. Two dedicated coaches carried thirteen gentlemen of the Launceston cricket club, and fourteen from the Derwent club in Hobart Town, to Oatlands for a cricket match. It was 'only after a severe contest that the Launceston club could claim the championship of VDL', and after a fine dinner, the teams returned home in the same vehicles, the victors being cheered as they passed through the towns and villages en route.[67] From an operational and recreational perspective, the event demonstrated the developing capability and opportunity to travel across half the island and back in one day, while conducting a lengthy activity during the middle of the day. Distance was being tamed.

The style and tone of 'Zwartback' imitated that of Dickens' *Pickwick Papers*, whose very popular serials were being imported at the time; but no similar fictional account of coaching in VDL was penned. Thus locally available coaching stories were mostly English, which further reinforced English coaching practices and expectations,

---

[63] Letter to the Editor, NEHEMIAH ZWARTBACK, in ibid., 21 November 1837, p. 6.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Nehemiah – rebuilder of Jerusalem, but also in a moral and ethical sense; Zwartback – perhaps hard-cheeked, or well-baked.
[66] MR. T. F. O'MEAGHER, letter to Mr. Duffy, editor of the Dublin Nation, dated Van Diemen's Land, Ross, District of Campbell Town, February 10, 1850, in *Launceston Examiner*, 25 September 1850, p. 4.
[67] GRAND CRICKET MATCH, in ibid., 24 April 1850, p. 5.

but did not serve to illustrate local differences, and little information was readily available about the island's stage-coach proprietors or other participants in the enterprises.

Sharon Morgan identified some social characteristics of settler land developers, which were also applicable to coaching entrepreneurs. She noted the penal origins of the colony caused settlers to distrust each other 'often with good reason'; but that the convicts were not the only inhabitants whose conduct was deplorable, and real success was most likely to be achieved by those who 'brought sufficient capital … and were prepared to work'.[68] Nevertheless, especially during the early bartering period, debt was very difficult to discharge, and many became insolvent. The coaching entrepreneurs were less well capitalised than the landed settlers, more dependent upon trust between partners and suppliers, and therefore more vulnerable to risk leading to insolvency.

However, one group within the industry, which enjoyed some insulation against such threats were the publicans. They often acted as money-lenders at considerable rates of interest and were in a position to amass wealth (including gaining additional land grants) through their customers' default.[69] Nevertheless, stage-coach associated, innkeepers and licensees also featured frequently among the insolvents, although Bigge did not consider the level of indebtedness in VDL to be any worse than that in NSW.[70] Once again, although the scale of comparison between England and VDL was quite disproportionate, all of the same, and perhaps more, elements were present.

Hartwell noted that VDL was initially settled for political and social, and not economic reasons, but that as the urban population grew, the economy became more dependent upon the price of raw materials, which were produced by only a small percentage of the population. These materials, particularly wool, but also wheat, were susceptible to the weather conditions, and vulnerable to variations in demand and

---

[68] Sharon Morgan, *Land settlement in early Tasmania : creating an antipodean England* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 49 and p. 55.
[69] Ibid., p. 36.
[70] Bigge, *Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry, on the state of agriculture and trade in the colony of New South Wales*, p. 29.

price in the export markets to Britain and NSW.[71] These volatile conditions affected the agrarian VDL economy and threatened the viability of most private enterprises.

During the period in which entrepreneurs were seeking to establish stage-coach ventures, there were three periods of economic depression: 1834-5, 1838, and 1842-5.[72] The causes, albeit not all present on every occasion, included: land speculation and the export of capital (especially to Port Phillip and South Australia); stresses in the banking and credit system, including high interest rates; an adverse balance of trade; poor seasons in the island, coinciding with good harvests in NSW, and vice versa; inconsistent government policy and practice, including regarding the immigration of free labour; and changes to the convict system.[73]

Wages for mechanics and artisans declined steadily from 12 shillings per day in 1824, to around five shillings per day in 1840.[74] This was a loss of disposable income for potential stage-coach passengers. The regressive passenger market situation was exacerbated by an exodus of free inhabitants to Victoria from 1836, which included entrepreneurs and their capital that might otherwise have been available for the establishment and operation of stage-coach ventures. A similar situation arose in 1849 with the discovery of gold in California.

Census figures between 1842 and 1851, suggested a net emigration of approximately 1000 per annum. Paradoxically, because of the oversupply of labour at the time, this situation proved beneficial to the economy;[75] but, since absolute numbers of potential passengers were a key to stage-coach viability, the situation was still more damaging for their enterprises.

Therefore, over the initial, critical twenty-five year period of stage-coach development, the island's economy was extremely volatile: the passenger market was vulnerable to a decline in overall numbers; potential passengers suffered a loss of over fifty per cent in their wages; credit, if available, was very expensive; and men of initiative and capital (eg John Fawkner), who might have operated stage-coach enterprises, left the colony to seek better opportunities elsewhere. The commercial

---

[71] Hartwell, *The economic development of Van Diemen's Land : 1820-1850*, p. 20.
[72] Ibid., p. 88.
[73] Ibid., p. 235.
[74] Ibid., p. 85.
[75] Ibid., p. 83.

environment was therefore one of very high risk (especially for novice entrepreneurs), unpredictable, and subject to wild fluctuations.

Gold discoveries on the mainland and in California revived the impetus for minerals exploration in VDL. Before 1850, inland salt was being exploited, but although iron ore and asbestos had been discovered near the Tamar, gold near St Patrick's Head, and copper near Bridgewater, none were successfully commercially exploited.[76] Some coal had been commercially extracted from the Coal Valley around Richmond and Jerusalem, but Port Arthur had furnished the only regular coal supply.[77] Therefore, populations associated with minerals extraction were not an early generator of demand for passenger transport services, but in the latter half of the 19th century, new mineral exploration introduced population into more remote areas, and prompted the need for supporting transport and communications services.

The nature of the improvised and developmental tracks and roadways in those areas became another factor that influenced the use of stage-coaches, and particularly those of an English type, in Tasmania. Steel-sprung English coaches of the period were designed to travel on well-formed roads and were not suited to developmental tracks.

This situation was demonstrated by the introduction of coaches into Victoria in 1853 and their use on the unformed tracks from Melbourne to Ballarat to service the goldfields. Because English coaches were unsuitable, 'Adams Express', an American company, introduced a stage-coach with leather-suspension of a lighter construction than the English coaches, to its Melbourne operation.[78] The company soon became known as 'Cobb & Co', an iconic Australian organisation, which under various management structures operated throughout mainland Australia well into the 20th century, and in New Zealand and Japan;[79] but not in Tasmania.

---

[76] Glyn Roberts, *The Role of Government in the Development of the Tasmanian Metal Mining Industry: 1803-1883* (Hobart, 1999), pp. 8-11.
[77] Hartwell, *The economic development of Van Diemen's Land : 1820-1850*, pp. 153-54.
[78] Kenneth Ashurst Austin, *A pictorial history of Cobb & Co: the coaching age in Australia, 1854-1924* (Adelaide, 1977), p. 38.
[79] Joan Rutherford, 'A History of Cobb & Co 1853-1955', (State Library of NSW - Mitchell Library, 1959?), pp. 3-10.

All the Cobb & Co historians (including the latest, Sam Everingham)[80] stressed the unique suitability of the American coach, and Rutherford and Austin implied the 'Concord' design was a special development. However, English coaches had been suspended on leather straps before the introduction of metal springs in 1754 following improvements in road construction.[81] The 'Concord' design was simply a more suitable vehicle for poor road conditions. Such vehicles were used in later Tasmanian coaching enterprises servicing new settlements along unformed tracks, although the strap suspension system resulted in considerable swaying of the coach body and caused many passengers to feel sick.

Cobb & Co was established fifty years after the first settlement on the Derwent, and almost thirty years after the first coach services between New Norfolk and Hobart Town (notwithstanding Everingham's[82] and Lee's[83] reports of a service in 1819 between Hobart and Launceston on one of 'the only two decent roads in Australia' [further discussed in Chapter 3]). Cobb & Co therefore did not provide any service during the development of stage-coaches in VDL, nor did it act as a model. However, it did offer a later, alternative example for use on undeveloped roads and another source of coaches for import to the island. Cobb & Co's mainland operations, in coordinating branch feeders to the railway lines, pre-dated the development of passenger railway services in Tasmania and did serve as a business model to supplement the English stage-coach example as railways entered service.

Changes in available technology thus affected the development of the stage-coach industry. The first steam engine had been imported into the colony in 1829 to power a flour mill,[84] and by December 1832, a steam packet was making the crossing between Hobart Town and Kangaroo Point every two hours in each direction in daylight hours.[85] The steamer *Surprize* ran for over three years without any accident

---

[80] Sam Everingham, *Wild Ride - The Rise and Fall of Cobb & Co* (Camberwell, Vic., 2007), pp. 13-14.
[81] George Athelstane Thrupp, *The History of Coaches* (London, 1877), p. 103 and p. 109.
[82] Everingham, *Wild Ride - The Rise and Fall of Cobb & Co*, p. 14.
[83] Robert S. Lee, *Transport : an Australian history* (Sydney, 2010), p. 100.
[84] J. Moore-Robinson and Tasmanian Government Tourist Bureau, *Historical Brevities of Tasmania* (Hobart, 1937), p. 49.
[85] *Colonial Times*, 18 December 1832, p. 4.

before being offered for sale,[86] and by 1835 had steam-powered competition on the route from the *Governor Arthur,* whose proposed daily service between Hobart Town and New Norfolk had presumably been abandoned, no doubt to the satisfaction of the coach operators.[87]

But the abandonment was short-lived. Regarding a steamer operating on the New Norfolk to Hobart Town route, the *Colonial Times* noted in 1837 that 'the four coaches running between the capital and New Norfolk take at least from £8 to £10 daily; and the seven boats … must surely average at least £30 a week'.[88] The newspaper's opinion seemed to be that there was ample patronage to sustain viable growth on the route, although it did not consider all the factors.

The coach operators had to reduce their services seasonally, due to the bad state of the roads and the shortness of the winter days.[89] The steamer was not similarly vulnerable to the vagaries of the seasons and certainly not to the conditions of the roads; thus, although its departure times varied seasonally, it could offer an advantage in reliability and comfort over the stage-coach services. Indeed, the steamer provided 'a Steward, who will furnish Refreshments at the usual rates charged at Inns' as well as every convenience for ladies.[90]

However, despite being competition, steam ferries also presented new commercial opportunities and a requirement for their coordination into travel patterns. For example, in addition to his Green Ponds link to the steamer at Bridgewater, William Cutts announced an additional conveyance to run daily from Richmond to meet the steamer at Risdon.[91] As usual, developments in the north were a little later, but by 1842 the steamer *Gipsy* was in service on the Tamar, where sail-powered travel had long been unreliable.[92]

The *Launceston Examiner* hoped that a new service by the steamer *Cornubia* would benefit Launceston by making it the starting point for a passage to Port Phillip,

---

[86] Ibid., 2 June 1835, p. 2.
[87] *The Tasmanian and Austral-Asiatic Review*, 27 March 1835, p. 121 and 6 March 1835, p. 75.
[88] *Colonial Times*, 14 February 1837, p. 6.
[89] Ibid., 23 May 1837, p. 3.
[90] The Derwent Steamer, in ibid., 21 April 1840, p. 1.
[91] Ibid., 7 April 1840, p. 3.
[92] *Launceston Advertiser*, 22 December 1842, p. 3.

and that the coaches would profit by the arrangement.[93] However, such opportunities failed to increase the market. Nevertheless, Colonel Mundy recounted his experience of a journey from Hobart Town to Launceston (to join the steamer *Shamrock*) by stage-coach;[94] so further coordinated travel opportunities were developed but were subject to timing and the vagaries of the colonial economy.

The next technological development to affect stage-coach enterprises was the introduction of the electric telegraph, but only insofar as its carriage of inland information was concerned. The coaching enterprises' primacy in communications was challenged by the time-speed-distance advantages of the new alternative. Also, from a business perspective the stage-coach enterprises' ability to offset losses against the value of the mail contract was diminished.

A further technological challenge to the stage-coach came from the establishment of railways. Although the primary purpose of railway development was the carriage of materiel, railways progressively drew mail, parcel and passenger income from stage-coach operators on the main routes and in regional areas, thereby further challenging the enterprises' viability.

With regard to passengers on the Main Line, Stancombe said 'They forsook the coaches utterly. The inns along the road fell silent and deserted'.[95] This had not been the case in England, where coaches adapted to become feeders to the rail trunks, nor was it the case in NSW where Cobb & Co integrated, and even anticipated, railway route development. Railways were expensive to establish and maintain, and the market would always require a sustainable mix of transport options. Stancombe's assertion will therefore be contrasted later against the actions of the colonial stage-coach entrepreneurs in the face of change.

---

[93] THE "CORNUBIA." in *Launceston Examiner*, 12 June 1847, p. 4.
[94] January 13th, 1851, in Godfrey Charles Mundy, *Our antipodes, or, Residence and rambles in the Australasian colonies: with a glimpse of the gold fields* (London, 1852), pp. 228-29.
[95] George Hawley Stancombe, *Highway in Van Diemen's Land* (Glendessary, Western Junction, Tas., 1968), p. 52.

2B - Legislation and Regulation

A Constitutional Act, giving the colony an elective parliament, received Royal Assent in 1855[96] and with effect from 1 January 1856 the name Tasmania was substituted for that of VDL.[97] The end of 1855 was therefore an administrative, organisational and political transition point. Government legislation and regulation of communication, transport and hospitality enterprises, before and after colonial self-government, was an essential element in the colonial business and operating environment. Communication between population centres was a necessity, but its development had, initially, been slow. Even at the end of the 1820s, little progress had been made towards establishing an effective postal service between the two main towns.[98]

In 1828, the VDL colonial government, referencing an earlier British Act dating from the time of Queen Anne, passed the *(Temporary) Postage Act (1828)*, which authorised the Lieutenant-Governor to make provisions for the establishment of a General Post Office (GPO) with a Post Master General (PMG) until a Post Office department was properly established.[99] Under the Act, mail contractors and carriers were exempt from payment of ferryage, and ferry, punt, and turnpike, tolls and fees.[100] Any rates and fees received for the postal service were reserved to the government for the maintenance and support of the Post Office, and any surplus was to be put towards the construction and repair of roads and bridges.[101]

The responsible Lieutenant-Governor, George Arthur, was ‘an experienced and successful organizer, [and] a strong and capable administrator’,[102] whose most important contribution to the progress of the colony was the necessary development of an effective bureaucracy and governance framework. However, at that time

---

[96] Proclamation, Govt Cottage New Norfolk, Gov H.E.F. Young, 24 October 1855, *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 30 October 1855, p. 1196.
[97] Proclamation, Govt House, 26 November 1855, ibid. 27 November 1855, p. 1301.
[98] V.B. Adnum, *A History of the Post Office in Tasmania* (Hobart, 1975), pp. 14-15.
[99] His Excellency Colonel George Arthur Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act to provide for the temporary Conveyance and Postage of Letters', in *9 George IV No 6 (1828)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1828), Preamble.
[100] Ibid., Section 12.
[101] Ibid., Section 20.
[102] M.C.I. Levy, *Governor George Arthur: a colonial benevolent despot* (Melbourne, 1953), p. 6.

(around the 1830 tipping point) Arthur's policy priorities were more focused on establishing security in the settled districts, the conduct of the Black Line operation, conciliation, convict management, land grants and civil organisation, than on the development of a Post Office.

Nevertheless, once the security situation improved, the government called for one-year tenders for the conveyance of mails between Hobart Town and Launceston and *vice versa*, in three stages, commencing in June 1832.[103] Tenders were to be for each stage, or as a whole, and the service was to be conducted at 5 mph (therefore not on foot) and completed in 24 hours. Contractors could have convict messengers assigned, but securities for fulfilment were required. Rates of postage were to be calculated according to weight and distance, although certain items were to be exempt from charges.[104] To avoid dispute, distances were officially promulgated for the main line of road, and for the branch mails.[105]

The colonial ways and means therefore differed from their earlier British counterparts, in that the PMG contracted with the individual mail carriers, and not with one prime contractor (viz Vidler at Millbank, whose responsibility had been to build, manage and provide mail-coaches, and to sub-contract their operation). In the colonial situation, the operators incurred the capital investment in mail-coaches and carts. The contract provisions, and performance requirements, continued to develop into the period of self-government, and the colonial Post Office sought to ensure its share of the carriage of mails and parcels.

Therefore, when the contract was next let, the mails were to be conveyed at 6 mph during a total time of 20 hours, with a warning that contractors were not 'to allow passengers to carry letters, to the injury of the Post Office Revenue, or any parcel … less than eight ounces in weight'.[106] Henceforward, contractors would be penalised 'at the rate of ten shillings for each half hour' by which they exceeded the specified time. The Post Office acted to enforce its monopoly and ensure the reliability of its service.

---

[103] GN 82, CSO 5 Apr 1832, *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 14 Apr 1832, p. 154.
[104] Proclamation, Govt House, 17 May 1832, ibid., 19 May 1832, pp. 227-232.
[105] GN 131, CSO 30 May 1832, ibid., 1 Jun 1832, p. 281.
[106] GN 177, CSO 2 July 1833, ibid., 5 July 1833, pp. 331-2.

Communications had resumed a higher government priority and the Post Office's trading position was strengthened by the passage of the amending and consolidating *Postage Act (1834)*, which stipulated that 'no letter or packet shall be carried for hire or reward otherwise than by post'.[107] However, this restriction was limited to letters weighing up to four ounces and excluded deeds, conveyances or affidavits, to attract the carriage of which, legal depositions were to be carried free of charge, and deeds at half price.[108] Newspapers were to be carried at one penny each, which progressively led to a weight and volume concern for mail carriers. John West noted 'that in 1832 the number of newspapers carried by post was 13,000; in 1833, 102,400':[109] an enormous and rapid increase.

The Act also stated that it was 'lawful for' the PMG to establish written contracts,[110] but it did not stipulate that the PMG was required to call for tenders. Within this legal position, there was room for the PMG, whose primary aim was always the on-time delivery of the mail, to negotiate contract developments in the interest of best value for money, rather than simply accepting the lowest tender; but such negotiations were politically sensitive and subject to censure from the public and press.

The tender process developed towards consolidated and synchronised tenders for the main and branch mails.[111] Developments concentrated on increased speed, enforcement of regulations, the imposition of time penalties, and free carriage of the PMG or his representative. Consequently, some contracts were not taken up, where contractors considered the route not viable or the PMG was not prepared to pay the contractors' asking price, and the PMG advertised for 'Several Ticket-of-Leave Men

---

[107] His Excellency Colonel George Arthur Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act to amend and consolidate the laws providing for the conveyance and postage of Letters', in *4 William IV No 18 (1834)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1834), Section 24.
[108] Ibid., Sections 25 and 4.
[109] John West and A.G.L. Shaw, *The History of Tasmania : with copious information respecting the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia &c., &c., &c*, Australian classics (Sydney, 1981), p. 581, note 74.
[110] Council, 'An Act to amend and consolidate the laws providing for the conveyance and postage of Letters', Section 26.
[111] eg GPO, PMG (J.T. Collicott), 27 June 1837, *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 30 June 1837, p. 551.

… as Carriers of Sealed Mails in the Interior',[112] thus resorting to employing his own staff rather than letting an expensive contract.

However, in a move which further exacerbated difficulties faced by the PMG and his contractors, from September 1841, the Post Office's carriage and handling of all newspapers was to be 'free of all Postage or charge whatsoever'.[113] The effect of this was to reduce the revenue, increase the weight and volume that had to be carried, and no doubt caused the contractors to reassess their means of transport. For instance, horse mails might no longer suffice to carry the loads, and stage-coaches might have their space available for passengers restricted, thereby reducing their profit margin.

In early 1844, security on the road became an issue again, and the GPO's first response was to seek tenders for the supply of weapons, with which to arm guards,[114] before implementing other changes, which were subject to contract renegotiation. By the letting of the contract commencing in October 1848, among other requirements, the contractor was to 'give up the back of the Mail Coach exclusively for the Post Office guard', and the PMG reserved the right to approve or disapprove: the vehicle by which the Mails were carried; the 'division in which the Mails are deposited'; and the appointment of individual mail-riders.[115]

For the contractor, there were many practical and financial constraints in these requirements, and because the late penalties remained severe, these must have caused the quantum of the tender to rise. However, for the contract period from October 1851, the conditions became yet more disadvantageous, as the exemption from the payment of tolls on account of carrying the mails was removed.[116]

Before the next Main Road tender was sought, a new Post Office Act was introduced, which reinforced the Post Office's monopoly over the carriage of letters and packets but there was still scope for some private enterprise delivery.[117] Increased

---

[112] GPO, PMG (F.C. Smith), 24 September 1841, ibid., 8 October 1848, p. 1407.
[113] Proclamation, Lieutenant-Governor, Government House, 9 September 1841, ibid., 10 September 1841, pp. 1169-70.
[114] GPO, PMG (F.C. Smith), 1 March 1844, ibid., 8 March 1844, p. 285.
[115] GPO, PMG (F.C. Smith), 7 July 1848, ibid., 11 July 1848, pp. 607-09.
[116] GPO, PMG (F.C. Smith), 1 July 1851, ibid., 1 July 1851, pp. 514-16.
[117] His Excellency Sir William Thomas Denison Knight Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the Advice of the Legislative Council., 'An Act to regulate the Conveyance and Postage of Letters. [31st August,

penalties applied for any behaviour, which resulted in the late arrival of the mail, unless caused 'by the state of the weather or the badness of the roads or the occurrence of some accident or other excusable circumstance'. [118] Whether mechanical breakdown of the vehicle was an excusable circumstance was not made clear.

Progressively, all the contractual advantages seemed to rest with the PMG, who nevertheless increased his requirements;[119] but perhaps the restrictions, penalties and uncertainties were beginning to push the limit beyond the contractors' ability to return a profit. In the Main Road contract effective from August 1855, there were no changes to the six daily mails, or the schedule, but the PMG would have no objection 'to the mails being conveyed by a Two-horse Mail Cart' as long as the security and condition of the mail was assured.[120] Such a request indicated that stage-coach operators became progressively less keen to hold the mail contract and the PMG was looking to alternative solutions. Even so, suitable bids were not forthcoming.[121] The PMG also stipulated the contractor's responsibility for the provision and condition of coach lamps, [122] thereby imposing another cost on the coaching contractor.

For the Post Office Department's delivery of the inland mails and its involvement of contractors, 1855 was a transition point into a different business environment, one which included the electric telegraph and the introduction of railways. The Post Office was undoubtedly a key driver in the origin and development of the stage-coach industry and especially of its route structure in VDL; but each was only ever a part of the other, and stage-coach development was subject to many other influences.

The 1832 Hobart Town to Launceston mail contract had called for a weekly service at 5 mph within a total time of 24 hours. By the time the 1851 contract took effect, daily mails (Sunday excepted) to and from Hobart Town and Launceston, were

---

1853]', in *17 Victoria No 6 (1853)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1853), Sections 42 and 43.
[118] Ibid., Section 45.
[119] eg GPO, PMG (F.C. Smith), 20 June 1854, *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 20 June 1854, p. 585.
[120] GPO, PMG (F.C. Smith), 9 April 1855, ibid., 10 April 1855, pp. 537-38.
[121] GPO, Extension of Time for Receipt of Tenders for Launceston and Hobart Town Mails, PMG (F.C. Smith), 24 July 1855, ibid., 24 July 1855, pp. 847-8.
[122] Ibid., 10 April 1855, p. 538.

in place.[123] These six daily mails were effected by (a minimum) means of five night mails, and one day mail. The contract required a service at 7½ mph within a total time of 15 hours and with significant penalties for late performance. In fact, a time of 15 hours over 121 miles required an average above 8 mph, without (fourteen, later thirteen) stoppages. The main factors, which enabled this improved performance, were the avoidance of delays at ferries, or caused by flooded roadways, and the provision of a safe and fast, all-weather road surface, by day and night. These variables were matters for the government, which had adopted a range of approaches towards dealing with such public works requirements. For example, it established punts at key river crossings, such as that at Perth, which it contracted out.[124]

Government constructed most minor bridges, and some major bridges, such as those at Perth, Campbell Town, and Ross, on its own account;[125] but a group of subscribers formed a company to erect a bridge across the South Esk at Norfolk Plains. The subscribers, included gentlemen and yeomen, a doctor and one carrier, but no-one immediately identifiable as a coach operator or mail contractor. The company was authorised to collect tolls for the recovery of its costs and the repayment of capital, but mail-related traffic was toll-free.[126] Similar arrangements were made for the construction of the bridges at New Norfolk[127] and Entally.[128]

---

[123] GPO, PMG (F.C. Smith), 18 September 1851, ibid., 23 September 1851, pp. 811-12. Section 62.
[124] Office of the Inspector of Roads, 12 July 1832, ibid., 13 July 1832, p. 384.
[125] Proposed Expenditure - 1837, Lieutenant-Governor, Government House, 5 August 1836, ibid., 12 August 1836, p. 777.
[126] His Excellency Sir John Franklin Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for making and maintaining a Bridge over the South Esk River at Norfolk Plains', in *3 Victoria No 7 (1839)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1839), Sections 15 and 19.
[127] His Excellency Sir John Franklin Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for erecting and maintaining a Bridge across the River Derwent in the Township of New Norfolk in the County of Buckingham', in *3 Victoria No 8 (1839)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1839).
[128] His Excellency Sir John Franklin Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council., 'An Act for making and maintaining a Bridge over the South Esk River at Reibey's Ford', in *6 Victoria No 8 (1842)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1842).

After legal disputation concerning repugnancy, the Legislative Council passed the *Road Act (1840)*, which established requirements for road widths, safety and the responsibilities of road users. Significantly, drivers were to keep 'on the left or near side of the Main or Cross Road'.[129] Despite the *Launceston Examiner* some years later still considering this rule merely advisory,[130] the Act imposed penalties for non-compliance with what would seem to be the first such official traffic rule in the island.

However, it was not without precedent in English law. In his response to Mr Justice Montagu's affirmation that the *Road Act (4, Vict, 32)* was repugnant to the Law of England, MacDowell, the Attorney-General, specifically stated 'the 56th section, regulating the conduct of drivers of waggons, &c. is taken from an English Act'.[131] While MacDowell undoubtedly took satisfaction in pointing out that an extract from an English Act could not be repugnant to English law, it showed again how experience and precedent from overseas, were incorporated into practice by the VDL government.

Nevertheless, it was one matter to pass legislation, and another to enforce it. Therefore, the government introduced a *Police Act (1838)*, which included powers enabling policing of the responsibilities of drivers under the Road Act, including for: any accident or damage caused by a driver's neglect, wilful misbehaviour or inattention; the proper management of horses; the requirement to drive on the left; and the responsibility not to obstruct the street or highway.[132] From January 1839, police were to ensure the owners of carts and carriages displayed details of their vehicle licence as required, and persons caught driving 'furiously' or negligently, were, on conviction, to be fined up to £10.[133]

---

[129] His Excellency Sir John Franklin Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for the making altering improving and defining the Main and other Roads of this Island', in *4 Victoria No 35 (1840)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1840), Section 62.
[130] The Laws of the Road, in *Launceston Examiner*, 11 July 1849, pp. 2-3.
[131] Report, MacDowell - Franklin, Attorney-General's Office, 30 November 1840, *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 1 January 1841, p. 24.
[132] His Excellency Sir John Franklin Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act to regulate the Police in certain Towns and Ports within the Island of Van Diemen's Land...', in *2 Victoria No 22 (1838)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1838), Sections 8 and 33.
[133] Ibid., Sections 35 and 38.

Road users continually resisted the government's efforts to raise revenue for transport infrastructure through the imposition of tolls. In 1845, Lieutenant-Governor Eardley-Wilmot was 'disappointed' at the Legislative Council's refusal to support his proposal for a 'Turnpike Act, by which a moderate toll was to be levied for the repair of the Main Road'.[134] Government had already committed 600 convicts to hard labour on the road, at a value of £3600 pa, in addition to the amount hoped to be raised through turnpike tolls;[135] but toll-gates were not established until a separate *Main Road Act (1846)* was passed,[136] and then, not immediately.[137] A stage-coach incurred the first road toll: the *Launceston Examiner* noted that his 'Excellency's [Denison] administration will be remembered only in association with customs, duties, and internal taxes'.[138] Shortly afterwards, a northern toll-gate was also established on the Main Road outside Launceston near the Westbury Road junction.[139]

One long-awaited achievement for the government was the opening of the Bridgewater Bridge on 26 April 1849.[140] For coach operators, the bridge would speed their journeys, minimise delay and avoid 'a tedious, and at times a dangerous, ferry'.[141] It had been estimated that the bridge could save up to an hour on the journey, and in November that year 'Mrs. Cox's coach performed the distance from Launceston to Hobart Town … in the incredibly short space of eleven hours, including stoppages', which was the fastest time to date.[142]

---

[134] Lieutenant-Governor, Address to the Legislative Council, CC, 21 October 1845, *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 28 October 1845, p. 1329.
[135] Lieutenant-Governor, Address to the Legislative Council, CC, 30 July 1845, ibid., 5 August 1845, p. 956.
[136] His Excellency Sir John Eardley Eardley-Wilmot Baronet Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the Advice of the Legislative Council., 'An Act for the better Regulation and Maintenance of the Main Road from the City of Hobart Town to Launceston', in *10 Victoria No 12 (1846)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1846), Preamble.
[137] Proclamation, Toll-House on Main Road, New Town, Government House, 18 July 1848, *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 25 July 1848, pp. 659-60.
[138] *Launceston Examiner*, 3 January 1849, p. 5.
[139] Proclamation, Tolls on Main Road, Sand Hill, Launceston, Government House, 28 October 1848, *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 31 October 1848, pp.1084-85.
[140] Proclamation, Bridgewater Bridge, Government House, 23 April 1849, ibid., 24 April 1849, p. 242.
[141] Bridgewater Bridge at Hobart Town, in *The Illustrated London News*, 12 April 1851, pp. 287-88.
[142] *Launceston Examiner*, 14 November 1849, p. 9.

The government also regulated vehicles and other road users, which fitted into three broad categories: carts and carriers, urban hackney cabs, and stage-coaches. Firstly, because carters' activities had 'been found to facilitate the disposal of stolen property and to be productive of other evils', the *Hawkers and Carriers Act (1835)* required carters operating outside the two main towns to be licensed, and their charges were set; but the Act specifically did not apply to vehicles chiefly carrying mail or passengers.[143]

In his 1836 address to the Legislative Council, Lieutenant-Governor Arthur, noted the Colony's opportunity 'to appropriate from recent improvements in English law … [thereby] availing [itself] of the accumulated experience of many ages', and announced his intention to table a Bill to regulate stage-coaches.[144] Public safety was the primary concern in promoting the new 'Act for the Regulation of Stage Coaches', as colonial travellers had been put at risk by the recent overloading of stage-coaches and thenceforward, persons with any ownership in the operation of a stage-coach were to be licensed, with offenders liable to fines.[145]

The *Stage Coach Act (1836)* defined a stage-coach as follows:

> every Coach Carriage or Vehicle whatsoever used let out or employed for the purpose of carrying Passengers for hire each of whom shall in fact pay or be charged a separate fare for his seat or conveyance and which Coach Carriage or Vehicle shall ordinarily travel at the rate of three miles or more in the hour shall be deemed a Stage Coach within the meaning of this Act without regard to the number of wheels or Passengers or the number of horses or to its being an open or a close Carriage.[146]

A modern perception of what constituted a stage-coach is therefore insufficient to meet these legal purposes. While the typical coach and four was a stage-coach under

---

[143] His Excellency Colonel George Arthur Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act to provide for the Licensing of Hawkers and Carriers', in *6 William IV No 7 (1835)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1835), Preamble and Section 2.

[144] Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council of Van Diemen's Land, CC, 27 April 1836, *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 6 May 1836, pp. 342-45.

[145] His Excellency Colonel George Arthur Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for the Regulation of Stage Coaches', in *6 William IV No 12 (1836)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1836), Preamble.

[146] Ibid., Section 2.

the Act, so too was a one-horse, two-wheel cart carrying one separate-fare paying passenger. The 3 mph speed stipulation was probably intended to preclude ox-carts or bullock wagons. Also, there was no mention of fixed schedules; therefore the concept of regular passenger transport was absent.

There did not appear to be a specific definition of a stage-coach within the body of English law. A regulating Act of 1788 had referred to a 'coach, chaise or other carriage … going or travelling for hire'.[147] That definition was further addressed in an amending Act of 1790, which differentiated between those drawn by three or more horses, and those drawn by fewer than three.[148] Thus 'travelling for hire' was the most defining requirement. The main issues, which legislation sought to control, were: what constituted a passenger; how many passengers could be carried on which type of vehicle and in what seating configuration; the weight and loading of passengers and luggage to achieve a low centre of gravity; the dimensions of the vehicle for the same purpose; and the empowerment of passengers having safety concerns.[149]

Other issues included the question of bringing outside passengers into the body, which the coach operator would have wished to do to improve safety by lowering the centre of gravity. A 'person paying as an Outside Passenger' was permitted to travel inside with the agreement of at least one inside passenger, next to whom he or she must sit.[150] Nevertheless, inside passengers retained the right to refuse. It was not uncommon for a single, inside passenger to reserve all the inside seating to avoid being 'boxed up at … close quarters with some thoroughly uncongenial stranger'. [151] However, not all strangers were uncongenial; Crofts

---

[147] 'An act for limiting the number of persons to be carried on the outside of stage coaches or other carriages', in *28, George III, c. 57*, The Parliament of Great Britain (1788), Preamble.
[148] 'An act to alter, explain and amend an act, made in the twenty-eighth year of the reign of his present Majesty, intituled, An act for limiting the number of persons to be carried on the outside of stage coaches or other carriages, and for regulating the conduct of the drivers and guards thereof', in *30, George III, c. 36*, The Parliament of Great Britain (1790), Preamble.
[149] House of Commons, 'A Bill… for limiting the number of Persons to be carried on the Outside of Stage Coaches or other Carriages, and for other Purposes relating thereto', in *Cockton 1810 (287) I.463 mf 11.5* (1810).
[150] Ibid.
[151] John Ernest Victor Crofts, *Packhorse, waggon and post: land carriage and communications under the Tudors and Stuarts* (London, 1967), p. 126.

recounted the case of Marmaduke Rawdon, one such single inside traveller in Britain, who was prepared to share his journey with a young gentlewoman whom he considered an 'agreeable proposition as a travelling companion'.[152]

During the year before the VDL legislature passed its Bill, the NSW government had also enacted legislation to regulate stage-coaches. A comparison of the two colonial Acts shows that the definitions of stage-coaches were the same in effect, although the NSW definition was wordier, and the NSW Act required more details, including the extremities of the licensed route, to be displayed on the vehicle.[153] Also, the NSW Act adopted a different methodology for coach construction, passenger ratios, and passenger and luggage loading, which would have become design requirements for coach-builders, and affected the used coach, export market.[154]

Other NSW differences included a stipulation that only one person was allowed to sit beside the driver on the box; fines upon the proprietor and the driver for overloading; fare-paying passengers could require a toll-keeper to count the number of passengers or measure the height of the load; and the proprietor was liable if the driver or guard were a convict.[155] These latter VDL omissions probably reflected the early absence of toll-gates; that VDL still used the convict assignment, and not the probation system; and had only a small free population, and therefore a greater need for more flexible use of convicts. Also, at that time, NSW was seeking to expunge the convict stain.

Under the VDL *Stage Coach Act (1836)*, the agreement of two Justices of the Peace, one of whom was to be the Police Magistrate in a District in which the coach was to operate, was required to obtain a license, which incurred an annual fee. Before issuance, these certifying officers were to inspect the vehicle to 'determine the number of Passengers which may with safety and convenience be carried … in the inside and on the outside'. The number of authorised passengers was to be recorded in

---

[152] Life of Marmaduke Rawdon (Camden Society), p70, in ibid.
[153] The Governor of New South Wales and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for regulating Stage Carriages in New South Wales', in *6 William IV No 2 (1835) (NSW)*, Colonial Government of New South Wales (Sydney, 1835), Sections 2 and 10.
[154] Ibid., Section 11.
[155] Ibid., Sections 15, 16, 17 and 24.

the license, but any vehicle carrying four passengers inside was limited to a maximum of ten passengers outside, and one carrying six in, was limited to a maximum of twelve out.[156] This is a scientific, centre of gravity and weight and balance consideration, which regulated coach-builders in the configuration of any two-deck, stage coaches they manufactured.

As the scientific principle really concerned weight, and where the mass was loaded, the question of passengers and luggage needed to be further addressed. The number of licensed passengers was exclusive of the driver, but inclusive of any guard or conductor.[157] For a mail-coach therefore, the carriage of guards and the requirement to have space available for the PMG or his appointee, meant the loss of fare-paying passenger seats, which could not be lawfully circumvented.

What constituted a passenger? 'In the case of Children under seven years of age two of them shall be accounted as equal to one Adult person … but any one such Child only or any Child or Children in the lap shall not be counted at all.'[158] Here the scientific principle faltered. While 'two for one' was a reasonable planning measure for the calculation of weight, and from a centre of gravity perspective uncounted children in the lap would be beneficial if loaded low, every outside passenger could, theoretically, carry a child on the lap, which would seriously aggravate the top-heavy problem. Nor was any scientific limitation of the maximum weight of the vehicle achieved by these measures; thus vehicle safety might be compromised from a braking perspective, particularly on downhill runs. However, to be fair to the legislators of the time, even today, the aviation industry has not produced an effective system for the measurement of passengers for weight and balance calculations in light passenger aircraft, which is a very similar situation.

The Act contained a number of governance stipulations. Licenses (revenue raised from which was to be applied to the Departments of Roads and Bridges) were annual, but not transferable to another proprietor. The maximum number of passengers licensed for (inside/outside) carriage was to be displayed and breaches

[156] VDL Legislative Council, 'An Act for the Regulation of Stage Coaches', Sections 3 and 4.
[157] Ibid., Section 5.
[158] Ibid.

incurred a penalty of up to £20.[159] The required display of such information was intended to simplify the policing of offenders.

Two considerations bear upon the requirements so far: the weight and balance equation was also subject to the loading of luggage; and the proprietor had little effective control over compliance once the stage-coach began its journey, unless of course he or she accompanied it. To address the latter, the driver was made responsible, and subjected to the penalty if he allowed any excess passengers to be 'conveyed in upon or about' his coach. The wording was comprehensive to include any persons hanging from the sides or back of the coach. Passengers were not to be allowed to sit on luggage placed on the roof, or on any space reserved for luggage on the roof.[160] The restriction on the (unrestrained) passengers was to reduce the risk of their bouncing or falling off the roof.

During the twenty-six years between the enactment of the British Bill and the passage of the VDL *Stage Coach Act (1836)*, a number of minor amendments were made, one of which addressed the racing of stage-coaches. Drivers were not to 'commence or enter into any race or contest in speed with or against any other Carriage whatsoever, or against time'.[161] The VDL Act prohibited racing, but did not define it. Next, the culpable misbehaviour of stage-coach drivers, which resulted in accident and injury, was declared a criminal misdemeanour punishable by fine and imprisonment.[162] This provision was included in the VDL Act, but not in that of NSW, which did not declare reckless and dangerous driving a misdemeanour until 1849.[163]

One colonial stage-coach accident, down the Sand Hill in Launceston, provided examples of almost every legal consideration mentioned so far. In 1841, at

---

[159] Ibid., Sections 14, 6 and 8.
[160] Ibid., Section 9.
[161] House of Commons, 'A Bill for the more effectual Prevention of the Mischief occasioned by the inconsiderate driving of Stage Coaches, and other Public Conveyances', in *Cockton 1816 (461) II.749 mf 17.8* (1816), p. 2.
[162] House of Commons, 'A Bill for punishing criminally Drivers of Stage Coaches and Carriages, for Accidents occasioned by their Negligence or Misconduct', in *Cockton 1820 (59) I.23 mf 22.1* (1820).
[163] The Governor of New South Wales and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for punishing criminally Drivers of Stage Coaches and Carriages for accidents occasioned by their wilful misconduct', in *13 Victoria No 5 (1849) (NSW)*, Colonial Government of New South Wales (Sydney, 1849).

the inquest into the death of Jane Burnfield, 'whose remains … was lying on the ground a little behind the coach, her head was literally crushed to pieces; she was quite dead; a great quantity of her brains were lying close to her', the witness statements showed a considerable awareness of the law. A mail cart had caught up with the stage-coach but the 'the mail cart did not race the coach on any part of the road'. Speed was a factor; witnesses felt qualified to say the coach had been travelling at about 7 mph before the crest but at 12 mph downhill, and they reported up to fifteen passengers being carried outside, including the driver and his son on the box.[164]

Ever since its departure from Perth, the coach had been wallowing like 'a little boat at sea … its being top heavy made it sway so'; however, a livery stable keeper, who later examined the wreckage, reported a mechanical fault, which 'would have caused the coach to go very unsteadily, especially down hill'.[165] In fear, some men who had been on top of the coach clambered onto its side, whereupon it overturned. When the constable examined the details painted on the back of the coach, he found it was licensed to carry only four inside and six outside passengers. The coroner committed the driver to trial on a charge of manslaughter, but at the trial the jury acquitted him 'as it appeared that, although the coach was not in a fit state for the road, being defective, yet … the accident was not the result of wantonness or culpable negligence' on his part.[166] The gradient on the Sand Hill was reduced shortly afterwards.

Another, relevant piece of British legislation enacted before the passage of the colonial Acts, addressed the liability of businesses for loss or damage to articles being carried. The Bill sought to afford protection to carriers against their liability for the loss of undeclared valuables, defined such items, and limited the carrier's liability unless the consignor declared the article's nature and value. The carrier was permitted to charge a fee for the service, but was to issue a receipt, thereby acknowledging his responsibility for the insurance of the consigned article, and without which, his liability was not limited under the Act. The carrier's responsibility included for safe custody while in the company's offices, warehouses or receiving rooms, and not just

---

[164] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 13 February 1841, p. 2.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Ibid., 10 April 1841, p. 2.

in its vehicles in transit.[167] These provisions were not included in the colonial Acts, and colonial carriers therefore had to take individual action to limit their liability.

After its passage of the *Stage Coach Act (1836)*, the VDL Government turned its attention to its third category of road vehicles, colloquially known as hackney cabs. An Act was passed, initially to regulate 'Vehicles conveying Passengers and plying for Hire within the towns of this Colony or within a certain distance therefrom' (three miles). Licenses were required for 'every vehicle drawn by one or more horses and ordinarily used solely for the conveyance of Passengers … PROVIDED ALWAYS that this Act shall in nowise interfere with … *An Act for the Regulation of Stage Coaches*'.[168] Hackney cabs had their fares and the locations at which they awaited their customers decreed, but neither of these constraints applied to stage-coaches.

Government then further increased its control by repealing the *Hackney Cabs Act (1842) in toto* and issuing an amending Act. The amendments moved the area of authority out to four miles; drivers, and not just their vehicles, were to be licensed; furthermore, they were to be licensed for a specific cab, by vehicle number, and their licenses were subject to suspension or forfeiture for infringements of the Act.[169] As before, these regulations did not apply to stage-coaches.

However, while the two Acts differentiated between stage-coaches and hackney cabs, the distinction was not, in practice, so effective. Hackney cabs had little scope to venture beyond the four-mile limit, but stage-coaches, filling their time in town between schedules, free-lanced to the annoyance of local cab operators. One cab

---

[167] House of Commons, 'A Bill for the more effectual Protection of Mail Contractors, Stage Coach Proprietors, and other Common Carriers for Hire, against the loss of or injury to Parcels or Packages delivered to them for Coveyance or Custody, the Value and Contents of which shall not be declared to them by the Owners thereof', in *Cockton 1830 (622) III.315 mf 32.16* (1830), pp. 2-3.

[168] His Excellency Sir John Franklin Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for the Regulation of Vehicles conveying Passengers for Hire within Towns of this Island', in *6 Victoria No 4 (1842)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1842), Preamble and Section 11.

[169] His Excellency Sir William Thomas Denison Knight Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the Advice of the Legislative Council., 'An Act to repeal the Act of Council of this Island intituled An Act for the Regulation of Vehicles conveying Passengers for Hire within the Towns of this Island and to substitute other Provisions in lieu thereof', in *12 Victoria No 6 (1848)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1848), Sections 2, 5 and 6.

owner, for instance, complained of a local coach operator, awaiting his return departure time from Hobart 'carrying persons to races at New Town and to other places where any sport is going on' and underselling the cabbies 'by charging a mere trifle for the trip'.[170]

The greatest practical challenge for government was to enforce the legislation. The licensing and inspection of vehicles achieved organisational visibility of the operators and their areas of operation and afforded the travelling public some legal protection against, or redress for, malpractice. But although fines upon the proprietors were quite heavy, action against offences required that they be brought to official notice, either by direct police intervention or through public reporting. In a sparsely policed and populated colony, with an anti-authoritarian predisposition, neither of these were likely scenarios. Consequently, police involvement was most usual after an accident.

The VDL legislature, realistically, did not adopt any of the passenger empowerment strategies, such as the right to demand that a toll-collector measure and report infringements, or the right to have a wheel locked going downhill. The former was, at least initially, inapplicable, and the latter would probably have led to more confrontation with the egos employed as drivers and guards. Nor were excess passengers to be fined for their own part in the overloading. In theory, such a penalty should have improved the deterrent effect, but presumably legislators believed the offending passengers would not be deterred. In any case, the passengers' likely defence would have been that others climbed aboard after them. More likely, the legal view was that overloading was the responsibility of the driver, who could be more readily identified and more efficiently dealt with through the courts.

Drivers were subject to heavy fines, but nevertheless overloading continued. Again, presumably, drivers also believed their chances of being caught were slight. Finally, there was an English precedent of seizure and forfeit of the vehicle and horses, which the VDL legislature did not adopt. This was a penalty applied to the proprietors, who were unlikely to be present when the offence took place. Loss of the vehicle might mean a failure of the business, and was therefore an extreme penalty to impose upon an owner whose ability to control the situation was limited. The

---

[170] *Colonial Times*, 21 March 1848, p. 3.

legislators' judgement was probably therefore sound. For construction and maintenance, the proprietors were the most responsible; for all matters on the road, the driver was best placed to take responsibility, although the requirement for a hackney cab driver to be licensed, but not a stage-coach driver, was, initially, a legal inconsistency.

The VDL legislators therefore struck about the right balance in the regulation, deterrence, punishment, prohibition spectrum, and in the apportionment of responsibility. Nevertheless, the operators still needed to develop procedures to manage the shortfalls, particularly regarding total vehicle weight, the practicalities of achieving a low centre of gravity within the legal and commercial constraints, and to control the actions of the drivers on the road.

One further ordinance affected stage-coach enterprises. Government regulated the operation of inns, which were to be managed by reputable free persons, whose character had to be recommended by three respectable householders.[171] An annual licence, for which application was made in person to the magistrates, was required. Specifically, innkeepers were constrained to serving only travellers on Sundays, and no convicts after 8 pm.[172] Colonial innkeepers, male and female, were actively involved in stage-coach enterprises, and regulation of their establishments was another element in the legal and managerial complexity of the industry.

Thus the environment in which the stage-coach enterprises had to operate was shaped considerably by English precedent and experience and especially, as Lieutenant-Governor Arthur had noted, regarding the incorporation of English law. The VDL legislators also benefited from the extra fifteen years of NSW experience, but crafted legislation, particularly adapted to VDL and its circumstances, which was more comprehensive than that of either of its forebears. In the case of the Post Office, although English ways and means were extensively adopted, the single major

---

[171] Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies His Excellency Colonel George Arthur, with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for Regulating the Sale of Wine, and of Beer, Rum, and other Malt and Spirituous Liquors, by Retail:--- And promoting good Order in PUBLIC HOUSES', in *9 George IV No 2 (1828)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1828), Section 14.

[172] Ibid., Schedule B, clause 10.

contractor business model was not; again, probably because the scale of operations, and capital underpinning the coach-builders, was insufficient.

The colonial Post Office was instrumental in developing an inland communications route structure, which the passenger transport industry followed. Initially, the exemptions from tolls and the cushion of a government contract, were advantageous to the establishment and development of emergent stage-coach enterprises, but as the government moved towards full cost recovery for its services and public works, and the terms of the PMG's contract requirements became ever more arduous, mail contracts became less attractive.

Business confidence rose after lines of communication were no longer threatened by attacks from Aborigines, although sporadic threats to mail carts from bushrangers lingered, increasing the operators' costs for the provision of security. A greater commercial uncertainty arose from the series of economic depressions, the high cost of capital, a reduction in the wages of potential passengers, and indeed, from an exodus of free citizens to Victoria and California. Stage-coach enterprises also had to adapt to technological change following the introduction of steam-powered ferries, the electric telegraph and finally the railways. Only the opening of mines in new areas extended the otherwise stabilised route network, increasing the potential passenger market, but requiring adaptation to operations on poorly formed roads.

The skill required of entrepreneurs to manage business within a government framework in transition from penal to self-governing colony, and in the face of such economic, financial, legal, social, and workforce complexity would have been very considerable. Yet people with capital and managerial experience were primarily interested in land acquisition and development, and not in the service industries. Therefore, stage-coach entrepreneurs would have to be drawn from a free-settler, lower socio-economic group, or from expirees with some business skills, or from those who worked their way up through the business. In whichever case, an enormous determination to succeed would have been necessary; but it was the desired ends of individual entrepreneurs that would influence their definition of success in private businesses.

PART 1 - ORIGINS

CHAPTER 3

THE DEVELOPMENT OF STAGE-COACH BRANCH LINES

If the commercial conditions required for the establishment of stage-coach enterprises were dependent upon population growth, then the early population centres, outside Hobart Town, Launceston and George Town, were those settled by the Norfolk Island transferees. Although these arrived in small shipments, by late 1808, a total of 554 Norfolk Islanders, comprising 202 free settlers, 109 women, 220 children and 23 prisoners had landed.[1] Lieutenant-Governor David Collins regarded these settlers as another unproductive burden upon his fragile colony,[2] and it was some years before their numbers, augmented by settlers in the 1820s, would provide a viable commercial demand for public transport.

John West noted that the Norfolk Islanders were divided according to their wealth or origin, before being settled in the vicinity of Hobart Town, the Pittwater, or at New Norfolk or the Norfolk Plains.[3] The latter location was somewhat later than the others, partly due to the duality of the early colonial administration producing asymmetric development. However, whatever skills, experience or wealth were identified in determining the settlers' assigned locations, they had no bearing on the development of stage-coach enterprises. Only one family, the Ruffins,[4] and then not in the first generation, appear to have entered the industry. The significance of the Norfolk Islanders for stage-coach development therefore, is only as a locational population factor, and not as providers of any relevant skillsets.

---

[1] R.W. Giblin, *The Early History of Tasmania: the penal settlement era 1804-1828*, ed. J. D. A. Collier, vol. 2 (Melbourne, 1939), p. 60.
[2] John Currey, *David Collins: a colonial life*, Miegunyah volumes (Carlton South, Vic., 2000), p. 255.
[3] John West and A.G.L. Shaw, *The History of Tasmania : with copious information respecting the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia &c., &c., &c*, Australian classics (Sydney, 1981), p. 37.
[4] Isabella Mead, 'Settlement of the Norfolk Islanders at Norfolk Plains', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, Vol. 12, no. 2 (1964), p. 68.

1830 was a decisive point in the development of the stage-coach services. Before that year, only two services, each between New Norfolk and Hobart Town, were operated (with effect from 1826). Malcolm Kennedy mentioned a system of stage-coaches operating between Hobart Town and Launceston in 1819, although it was being compared with a NSW service about which he acknowledged some 'dispute on the grounds that the vehicle does not appear to have been a coach and the route was probably not done in strict stages'.[5] Kennedy's statement probably explains Lee's and Everingham's accounts mentioned in Chapter 2.

Data at Appendix A shows that of 525 identified stage-coach enterprises, only 42 were in operation before 1840 and of these, the northern branch enterprises numbered only eight and the operations on the main line of road numbered only five. In the south during the period 1831-34, the New Norfolk route was augmented and new routes were developed via the Kangaroo Point ferry onwards to Richmond and Sorell, from the Black Snake ferry to Green Ponds, and beyond New Norfolk to Hamilton. At the same time in the north, stage-coach routes were introduced from Launceston out to Perth and Norfolk Plains (Longford).

Appendix A also shows that 130 enterprises were started between 1840-56. This period pre-dated any expansion driven by mining developments and is therefore attributable to population growth in agrarian settlements or demand for travel between the two main towns. Passenger transport services therefore quadrupled in the sixteen years up to colonial self-government.

As noted in Chapter 2, the (1829) population was probably sufficient to satisfy a commercial business case, but nevertheless, ventures were not established. Although the New Norfolk stage-coach operation was active, the Prinseps mentioned the threat from Aborigines on the route.[6] Lieutenant-Governor Arthur reported that the Aborigines had made communication difficult, 'a risk of life, and almost impossible'.[7]

---

[5] Malcolm J. Kennedy, *Hauling the Loads: A History of Australia's Working Horses and Bullocks* (Melbourne, 1992), p. 43 and Note 8, p. 191.
[6] Mrs Augustus Prinsep, *Illustrations of Prinsep's Journal of a voyage from Calcutta to Van Diemen's Land : from original sketches taken during the years 1829 and 1830* (London, 1833), p. 71.
[7] West and Shaw, *The History of Tasmania : with copious information respecting the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia &c., &c., &c*, p. 283.

John West spoke of the 'perturbation' suffered by travellers and of the settlers' 'intense fear' of the Aborigines.[8] Recently, Nicholas Clements emphasised the reality of that fear, regardless of the question of blame, and the contrast between the perceptions and beliefs of the Hobartians and the attitudes of the white population in the interior.[9] Immediately before the Black Line campaign, only essential journeys were undertaken, and those preferably by horse for speed of escape; and while people could, and did, travel using private or hired means, the threat limited their willingness to do so.

After 1830, the combination of the spread of population and an improved security situation meant the developing passenger market could be realised. For potential stage-coach entrepreneurs, the direct threat of loss of their material investment on the road from attack was reduced to that from bushrangers. Investors were therefore more prepared to accept the risk associated with starting up a passenger transport enterprise.

Entrepreneurs are people who 'put together "new combinations" of economic factors to change the flow of economic life',[10] which was the challenge confronting settlers in the newly established colony. Specifically, the task of the stage-coach entrepreneurs was to introduce, coordinate and develop the combinations of activities which together enabled the delivery of passenger transport services. In short, if the end was to deliver a passenger transport service, the way was through the coordination of the supporting elements and the means consisted of the physical assets and the necessary finance.

The key research questions in this chapter are therefore: who were the participants who attempted these tasks in the nascent colony, and what coordinating business structure proved most suitable. Accordingly, the chapter will consider the types of persons who pioneered the development of stage-coach branch lines using Hobart Town and Launceston as hubs and their ability to effectively manage their enterprises.

---

[8] Ibid., pp. 284-6.
[9] Nicholas Clements, *The Black War: Fear, Sex and Resistance in Tasmania* (Saint Lucia, Qld., 2014), pp. 43-4.
[10] Citing Joseph Schumpeter in Jonathan Hughes, *The Vital Few: American Economic Progress and its Protagonists* (New York, 1973), p. 3.

Southern branch lines

In seeking the origins of Tasmanian coaching, the mainland experience gives an indication of time and method. In NSW, a stage-coach belonging to 'Messrs Raine and Curr',[11] first ran on 10 March 1821, between Sydney and Parramatta.[12] By November of 1823, Raine was running the stage-coach regularly,[13] and using six coaches by 1825.[14] However, in June 1827, the *Colonial Times and Tasmanian Advertiser* reported, pointedly, that there was not one stage-coach in Tasmania.[15]

Yet during the previous year, the same newspaper had reported that 'Mr. Martin's Van, between Hobart Town and New Norfolk, is a most convenient vehicle … Although not quite as good as an English Stage Coach, it is far better than a French Diligence.'[16] Either this report contradicts the newspaper's own, later statement about there being no stage-coach in Tasmania in 1827, or there was a definitional distinction about what precisely was meant by 'stage-coach'. John Martin ran his caravan along a regular route, with a schedule and fixed fares ('7s. 6d. *ready money'*).[17] Thus a stage-coach, as defined by law, was operating in Tasmania in 1826, on the route between Hobart and New Norfolk, and was probably the first separate fare, passenger transport service in the island.

Martin's van presented 'the opportunity to strangers and residents of Hobart-town of a short and pleasant excursion along the beautiful banks and scenery of the Derwent to New Norfolk, where the Inns afford every accommodation to the traveller at a reasonable rate'.[18] Even at that time, tourism was also part of the market, and the word 'excursion' suggested broader stage-coach employment than on regular schedules.

Competition followed. In 1830, James Roberts advertised his service, using Mrs Bridger's *Bush Inn* at New Norfolk, offering a curricle, adapted for more comfort than the vehicles of his opposition; and, in perhaps the first Tasmanian example of the

---

[11] *The Hobart Town Gazette and Southern Reporter*, 4 December 1819, p. 1S.
[12] *Hobart Town Gazette and Van Diemen's Land Advertiser*, 7 April 1821, p. 2.
[13] Ibid., 29 November 1823, p. 2.
[14] *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 27 August 1825, p. 2.
[15] *Colonial Times and Tasmanian Advertiser*, 1 June 1827, p. 3.
[16] Ibid., 8 December 1826, p. 3.
[17] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 26 January 1828, p. 2.
[18] Ibid.

imported cult of the driver as a romantic figure 'a steady, experienced, and obliging Driver'.[19] Ann Bridger, was a free settler, who arrived with her son (Henry - see later) in 1823. She built, owned and operated the *Bush Inn*, as well as the punt at New Norfolk.[20]

However, the *Eclipse* four-horse stage-coach, carrying six passengers inside and ten outside, which commenced on 1 September 1831,[21] was the first, scheduled use of a four-horse stage-coach in Tasmania. The *Courier* reported:

> we had the satisfaction to see the new four horse stage coach (the Eclipse) established by Mr. Lowe and Mr. Mills … make its first journey into town, driving down Elizabeth street, loaded with passengers inside and out, and the horn blowing in grand style. Its lively appearance … brought up the pleasing recollection of old times, when the mail coaches … of England were first established.[22]

(Moore-Robinson says Lowe and Mills operated 'the first regular line of coaches' on 3 September 1829.[23] Either, he is mistaken about the year, or he is referring to something less than a four-horse coach. If so, Martin's van nevertheless preceded it.) The journey took four hours, and the horses of any passengers coming from the country were accommodated free of charge if the owners returned by the same conveyance. This facility encouraged the use of New Norfolk as a regional centre for the convergence of passengers to feed the route.

The *Eclipse* probably also commenced the naming of coaches, following the English practice, and which added to the sense of excitement and fashion. However, Mills soon announced the dissolution of his partnership with George Lowe (a free settler and licensee who had arrived with his family in 1826)[24] and that he would carry on the business by himself.[25] The short duration of, and high turnover in, business partnerships and associations were constant themes in the development of the Tasmanian coaching industry.

---

[19] Ibid., 20 March 1830, p. 3.
[20] Henry Savery and Cecil Hadgraft, *The Hermit in Van Diemen's Land* (St. Lucia, Qld., 1964), note 97, p. 208.
[21] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 20 August 1831, p. 3, and 27 August 31, p. 3.
[22] Ibid., 3 September 1831, p. 2.
[23] J. Moore-Robinson and Tasmanian Government Tourist Bureau, *Historical Brevities of Tasmania* (Hobart, 1937) p. 35.
[24] Savery and Hadgraft, *The Hermit in Van Diemen's Land*, note 97, p. 208.
[25] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 22 October 1831, p. 1.

Realignments led to the formation of a consortium to challenge the *Eclipse*. With the first confirmed example of a VDL-built, four-horse stage-coach, James Roberts announced the *Reliance*, which he had had 'built in Hobart town … upon the Omnibus plan [to carry] 8 inside and 8 outside passengers'.[26] (An omnibus was a stage-coach designed for passenger capacity rather than comfort; it had limited luggage facilities and was optimised for short journeys.) The editorials of both the *Colonial Times*[27] and *Courier*[28] confirmed two stage-coaches were operating daily on the route; each was capable of carrying sixteen passengers.

Mills operated the *Eclipse* alone,[29] until he acquired an omnibus to operate a daily return journey from the *Fox Inn*, near the Black Snake to Hobart Town in the name of 'Mills & Co.'[30] This ferry to town and return initiative was immediately matched by 'Dixon & Co.' using an omnibus on the same route.[31] Meanwhile, Mills joined with George Wise in a company to increase the capacity on the New Norfolk route, daily, using the *Eclipse* and *Tally-Ho* coaches, between the *Ship Inn* in Hobart Town and the *Star and Garter*,[32] which inn seems to have been used by the rival coaching concerns simultaneously. George Wise was a free settler who arrived with his wife in 1822, and was proprietor of both the *Ship* and *Fox* inns.[33] The *Fox Inn*, roughly half-way along the route, was therefore a convenient stage to exchange the horses.

To further complicate matters, a third enterprise sought to enter the route. John Parker bought the imported *Fair Play* coach at auction from D.W. Bush to operate between Bush's *Tasmanian Arms* and Collins's *Star and Garter*.[34] But the terms of the sale caused friction between the vendor and purchaser, which was not an auspicious start for a business association. Shortly afterwards, Parker advised the public that his operation would be based upon *Mason's Hotel* in New Norfolk, in a

---

[26] Ibid., 10 March 1832, p. 3.
[27] *Colonial Times*, 4 April 1832, p. 2.
[28] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 14 April 1832, p. 2.
[29] *Colonial Times*, 30 May 1832, p. 3, and 12 June 32, p. 3.
[30] Ibid., 6 November 1832, p. 1.
[31] Ibid., 20 November 1832, p. 1.
[32] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 16 November 1832, p. 3.
[33] Savery and Hadgraft, *The Hermit in Van Diemen's Land*, note 57, pp. 202-3.
[34] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 30 November 1832, p. 3.

heavily punned advertisement, playing upon 'Reliance', 'Defiance', and 'Fair Play'.[35] His defiance was short-lived, and with effect from August 1833, *Fair Play* was in the hands of J. & S. Austin.[36]

With three concerns operating the route in early 1833, Wise, Mills & Co reminded the public that theirs was an 'old established Coach'.[37] At the same time, they reduced their fares and fixed a separate price for travel to and from the ferries. Their *Eclipse* and *Tally Ho* operated daily in opposite directions.[38] English-style, price cutting competition was developing in the VDL coaching industry, and a period of rationalisation, consolidation and repositioning then commenced.

'Messrs Austin and Baker' purchased the *Eclipse* from Mills, to run on the New Norfolk route.[39] As the Austins were already proprietors of the *Fair Play,* the new company swiftly augmented its services,[40] before, after almost a year, the partnership between Solomon and Josiah Austin and Charles Baker was 'dissolved by mutual consent'.[41] The Austins sold 'part of their interest in the New Norfolk road' to 'Messrs. Baker and Bridger' but continued to run their *Telegraph* coach between the *Ship Hotel* in Hobart and the *Star and Garter* in New Norfolk.[42] Baker was the same Charles Baker, whose partnership with the Austins had been recently dissolved,[43] and Baker and Bridger announced their *Union* coach would operate between the *Bush Hotel* in New Norfolk and the *Waterloo Tavern* in Murray Street, Hobart Town.[44]

As with the earlier case of John Parker, a price-cutting competition ensued and a legal, adversarial relationship developed between the rival operators centred on the Austins' sale of 'part of their interest in the road'. The Austins then sold the *Telegraph* coach to their brother 'Mr. James Austin … [and had] now no property in any coach except the "Emu,"' which they continued to operate on the route.[45]

---

[35] Ibid., 4 January 1833, p. 1.
[36] Ibid., 23 August 1833, p. 3.
[37] Ibid., 12 April 1833, p. 3.
[38] *Colonial Times*, 5 February 1833, p. 3.
[39] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 29 November 1833, p. 1.
[40] Ibid., 6 December 1833, p. 3.
[41] *Colonial Times*, 2 December 1834, p. 8.
[42] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 7 August 1835, p. 3.
[43] *Colonial Times*, 2 December 1834, p. 8.
[44] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 7 August 1835, p. 3.
[45] Ibid., 6 November 1835, p. 1.

James Austin briefly rented the coach out to be operated on the line by George Mills,[46] (not the Mills of Mills & Co, but a coachman, whose wife was soon afterwards brutally murdered on the road after alighting from the coach to enjoy a short walk home);[47] but the dispute seems to have been finally resolved by amalgamation into a new company, 'NEW NORFOLK COACHES', operated by James and Josiah Austin, Baker and Bridger, using the *Bush Hotel*, New Norfolk and the *Ship Hotel* in Hobart Town,[48] where a company cashier was employed.[49] However, the business arrangements changed yet again, and by June 'Solomon Austin, Josiah Austin, Charles Baker and Henry Bridger' were listed as proprietors.[50]

From this selection of complex business relationships a number of patterns emerge. A review of the records does not show that John Martin, Charles Baker, James Roberts or George Mills were convicts. Wise, Lowe and the Bridgers were free settlers who had arrived in the 1820s migration period, presumably with some capital, and who owned and operated inns, which were integral to the coaching enterprises.

The Austins were one generation removed from their convict uncle, James Austin, who had built a considerable fortune from operating his ferry, but who was unmarried and had no children at the time of his death in 1831.[51] Nephews Solomon and Josiah arrived as free settlers in 1825, and following their uncle's death, brought out their parents and siblings, including James Austin junior, who took over the inn at Compton Ferry (the eastern shore of Austin's Ferry).

The Austins were therefore also free settlers, capitalised by their inheritance from their uncle, whose (convict and other) networks they would have inherited along with his substantial property at the Ouse. James Austin junior subsequently joined the exodus to Port Phillip in 1837,[52] which explained his departure from the New Norfolk Coaches consortium. The Austins clearly had an extended family network, but the other free settlers had close family members to help run the business. When

---

[46] *Colonial Times*, 20 October 1835, p. 1.
[47] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 12 November 1836, p. 2.
[48] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 18 December 1835, p. 3.
[49] Ibid., 19 February 1836, p. 1.
[50] Ibid., 24 June 1836, p. 1.
[51] G.H. Stancombe, 'Austin, James (1776–1831)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne, 1966).
[52] P.L. Brown, 'Austin, Thomas (1815–1871)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne, 1966).

considering the size of these ventures therefore, small to medium, family businesses might best describe their enterprises.

On the other hand, David William Bush, a painter from Norwich transported for life, and John Parker, another lifer from London, both held tickets of leave.[53] Their disagreement had arisen from different interpretations of the terms of sale between vendor and purchaser. Bush clearly expected to gain a commercial advantage through the use of Parker, whom he induced into a business arrangement as a subordinate associate. Another convict, Robert Couling, a labourer from London transported for life,[54] having relocated to Launceston from Hobart Town advertised a van to operate between Launceston and Perth.[55] He was another ticket of leave man, who absented himself from muster and was embroiled in a property dispute in Hobart.[56] His coaching venture was of short duration if, indeed, it managed to start.

The *prima facie* case therefore suggests that the more successful southern entrepreneurs were the capitalised free settlers, who arrived in the 1820s migration, with or into family situations. The convict examples were men who attempted to cheat or exploit each other, and others. Little trust or business confidence would have been likely in such circumstances, and particularly between convict and free settler. Business associations therefore were less likely to be formed across the convict/settler divide.

However, legal disputes were not confined to the convict group. The Austins had a similar, deceptive objective in selling part of their interest in the road to a purchaser who had a presumption of no competition on the route, only to find the vendors remained as rivals. The precise terms of such contracts could only be tested at law. The Austins evaded the issue by selling to their brother, in another, albeit somewhat unethical, advantage conferred by family networks. Exact parallels would be found later as enterprises changed hands, and expectations of a monopoly were raised and confounded.

---

[53] Founders and Survivors, 'David William Bush', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31010373., and 'John Parker', http://foundersandsurvivors.org//c31a31340032.
[54] Founders and Survivors, 'Robert Couling', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31060155.
[55] *The Independent*, 15 December 1832, p. 3, and 22 December 32, p. 3.
[56] *Colonial Times*, 13 May 1834, p. 8, and 17 June 34, p. 5.

However, the coaching enterprises were not stand-alone ventures; instead, they were integrated into the inn-keeping business, which while allowing some cross-subsidisation, also increased their complexity. Several entrepreneurs owned inns at either end of their route to serve their coach business, thereby avoiding the difficulties and inefficiencies, which resulted from frequent changes of termini caused by disagreements with partners or associates. A wholly-owned, family business might therefore have been the preferred construct, providing of course, that the family was harmonious.

However, as routes were developed, opportunities and risks increasingly challenged the business skills of entrepreneurs. In the Richmond area for instance, Francis Atkinson, probably a Yorkshire saddler who was transported in 1826 for stealing in a house,[57] was described as 'an inn-keeper [*Sawyer's Arms*, Coal River] and coach proprietor'. At the first meeting of his creditors following his insolvency, his ethics, general management and financial accounting skills appeared limited. In the year to May 1847, he incurred liabilities of £1000, with only about £100 due to him in debts, while at the same time: spending £450 advanced to him under a mortgage, speculating in sheep, and only rarely paying the wages of his large staff. In one indication of the costs associated with a coaching business, the ostler (for the coach-horses only) 'proved for £5 due to him for wages, at 8s. per week, besides bed and board'.[58]

The insolvency of coaching associated innkeepers was a regular occurrence. However, as E.P. Thompson noted, at that time 'custom rather than costing (which was rarely understood), governed prices in many village industries'. [59] The methodology of a business case, although certainly applied in the government sector, and demonstrated by the colonial Post Office Department, was not widely understood or attempted. Nevertheless, it was a measure, which separated the efficient coaching entrepreneurs from their less successful contemporaries, and raised the question as to

---

[57] Founders and Survivors, 'Francis Atkinson', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31010231.
[58] INSOLVENT DEBTORS' COURT, in *The Courier*, 29 May 1847, p. 2, and 17 July 47, p. 3.
[59] E.P. Thompson, *The making of the English working class* (Ringwood, Vic., 1968), p. 260.

where, within an enterprise, management and accounting skills, if any, would be found.

Joseph Fisher, of the *Retreat Inn*, Brown's River, pioneered route development from the south of Hobart Town. Fisher had been sentenced in Oxford and transported in 1831 for machine breaking.[60] He was a family man, of good behaviour who quickly received his ticket of leave (1835). His wife and son presumably joined him shortly. As a millwright and carpenter, he was a skilled tradesman, and presumably better educated than most convicts. Also, being in a family situation, he perhaps had more in common with the free settlers than his fellow convicts. The Luddite convicts had a range of capabilities, which elevated their usefulness, speeded their tickets, and placed them in positions of comparative trust, despite the allegations of treachery and conspiracy levelled at reformers such as Luddites by government authorities in England at the time.[61]

Fisher drove his own coaches, until his arm was amputated following the accidental discharge of a passenger's loaded gun,[62] whereupon his son took over his driving role. It is likely therefore that before her death, his wife, Mary Ann,[63] had a role in running the inn and managing the coaching business, while her husband conducted operations on the road. However, following his route expansion north to Green Ponds, Fisher, like Baker and Bridger with the Austins, was involved in a dispute over the sale and purchase of coaching plant, having paid the vendor £200 to cease any coaching interest on the route.[64] Curiously, the *Fair Play* also featured in this dispute.

Despite the terrible murder of his wife, George Mills had progressed steadily, and by 1844 was running the *Perseverance* coach daily, between his *Brunswick Wine Vaults* in Hobart Town, and the *Bush Inn* (Charles Baker) in New Norfolk; six months

---

[60] Founders and Survivors, 'Joseph Fisher', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31140060.
[61] Thompson, *The making of the English working class*, p. 529.
[62] A SERIOUS ACCIDENT FROM FIRE-ARMS, in *Colonial Times*, 29 June 1852, p. 3.
[63] DEATH, in ibid., 14 June 1855, p. 2.
[64] Letter, FOUL PLAY IN EARNEST, Daniel Brown, in *The Hobarton Mercury*, 3 March 1856, p. 3.

later, he described the *Perseverence* as the 'New Norfolk Mail Coach'.[65] His branch mail contract was confirmed in the Audit Office record.[66] Thus Mills, from leasing a coach for a self-drive operation, had become a licensee and stage-coach proprietor, and had the additional security of a government contract to underpin his business. Furthermore, his Bridger-Charles Baker inn and coaching network was still effective.

Perhaps suffering some fatigue, Mills then sold his coach to Mark Brooker, a former (employed not contracting) coachman, to whom he also passed the license of the *Brunswick Wine Vaults*;[67] but although Brooker, a gentleman's servant and groom, who had been transported in 1825 for stealing, and had received a conditional pardon in 1838,[68] had extensive experience as a driver, he became another insolvent expiree and coachman who failed to make the transition to owner/operator. His venture failed within a year.[69]

During that year, and perhaps reflecting the development of the route into the upper Derwent valley, Mills had become licensee of the *Woolpack Inn*, at Macquarie Plains.[70] Following Brooker's failure, Mills resumed operating both the *Perseverance* and the *Brunswick Wine Vaults*, but died suddenly, aged 46.[71]

Since the murder of his first wife, Mills had remarried, and his license for the *Brunswick Wine Vaults* passed to his widow, Mahala Mills, who took on her deceased husband's business.[72] She quickly introduced the *Perseverance* onto the Green Ponds to Hobart Town route, with a daily service from *Ellis's Hotel*, and placed a new mail coach on the New Norfolk route between the usual inns.[73] That she moved so quickly

---

[65] NEW PATENT SAFETY COACH. — GEORGE MILLS, and THE "PERSEVERANCE" in *Colonial Times*, 30 January 1844, p. 2, and 17 July 44, p. 2.
[66] Warrant 814, Conveyance of Mail, AO dated 14 August 1844, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 16 August 1844, p. 979.
[67] New NORFOLK Royal Mail Coach Office AND BRUNSWICK WINE VAULTS, and TRANSFER OF PUBLICANS' LICENCES, HOBART TOWN, MONDAY, FEB 7, in *Colonial Times*, 8 February 1848, p. 1, and 15 February 48, p. 4.
[68] Founders and Survivors, 'Mark Brooker', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31011252.
[69] INSOLVENT COURT, in *Colonial Times*, 20 March 1849, p. 2.
[70] IRO, 30 September 1848, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 3 October 1848, p. 932.
[71] THE "PERSEVERANCE", and "BRUNSWICK WINE VAULTS", in *Colonial Times*, 22 May 1849, p. 1, and 1 June 49, p. 2.
[72] AT THE FOURTH QUARTERLY MEETING for granting publicans' licences, in *The Courier*, 8 August 1849, pp. 2-3.
[73] "Perseverance," Green Ponds Coach, M MILLS, in ibid., 24 October 1849, p. 3.

to expand the business, strongly suggests she was already involved in its management, which she continued to undertake successfully for some years. As had been the case in Britain, colonial women were accepted and respected inn-keepers, mail contractors, and stage-coach operators, and essential members of the associating networks.

Modern business advisors stress the importance of establishing networks to enhance the prospects of success. The English and colonial inn and stage-coach operators had their networks on the road, but also many informal networks which are increasingly lacking in modern society. Regardless of denomination, the Church was one such social networking opportunity. Joseph Fisher was a Freemason, as was innkeeper William Henry Ellis at Green Ponds (where his hotel was referred to as 'Mrs Ellis's Hotel'), another alternative network. Stage-coaches ran excursions to country auctions, and the races, where business could be conducted around the day's official activities; and horse breeding and racing was a vital element of, and influence upon, the stage-coach industry, and another network .[74]

The *Colonial Times* observed that the annual licensing day had 'been most particularly unfortunate' over a six-year period for the New Norfolk publicans travelling in coaches which had capsized on the day: 'either … the New Norfolk publicans were a very unlucky set, or … they are something else'.[75] In this case, official, annual requirements brought many publicans together, with the coach operators and time to spare, providing another network (and by implication, drinking) opportunity. Thus, informal networks were an important part of the stage-coach business arrangements and drew men and women from a range of religious, social, sporting and political affiliations.

However, the accidents on the road were a reminder of maintenance and repair costs, the risk of capital loss, and a threat to schedules run upon limited assets, which would result in lost revenue, or penalties under a mail contract. Accounts of accidents and implied inebriation were also an indication that the concern for safety upon the road, which prompted the passage of the *Stage Coach Act (1836)*, was locally driven,

---

[74] eg the Omnibus, and Messrs. Wise & Mills's coaches at the Sale of Mr. Dean's Farm, in *Colonial Times*, 26 August 1845, p. 1, 10 September 33, p. 1, and 14 March 32, p. 1.
[75] Ibid., 24 September 1833, p. 3.

and not just a transcription from England or NSW. The regulatory framework was necessary as self-supervision was not always sufficient.

Northern branch lines

Statistics for 1829 showed the population of Hobart Town as 5700, and that of Launceston as 1000,[76] ie almost six times greater, which strongly implied that Launceston was not an equally viable, commercial proposition as a transport hub as its southern counterpart, irrespective of any threat from Aborigines. By 1835, the free population of Launceston was 3193 (about one third that of Hobart Town), and the total population of the Norfolk Plains catchment was 1156, of whom, 676 were free.[77] This was still a small market within which to establish a transport business, but one which was rapidly expanding, having almost tripled over the six-year period.

Just as the Derwent ferries in the south had formed a cross-loading node, so too did the crossings of the South Esk in the north become a transport focal point. In 1830, Henry Clayton had established a ferry, in conjunction with his *Norfolk Arms Inn,* at Norfolk Plains,[78] and an alternative crossing point was by the punt at Perth, which Richard Heaney, of the *Perth Inn,* was operating in 1832.[79] Heaney does not appear in the convict records, but Clayton was probably a married, Yorkshire, machine breaker, with children, who was transported in 1821.[80]

Robert Couling's (abortive) proposal to run a service between Launceston and Perth was mentioned earlier, and his failure might have been due to the concurrent initiatives of John Pascoe Fawkner. Fawkner was the son of a convict and had arrived with his parents as part of David Collins' expedition. He established himself as a small-holder and baker, but was convicted for assisting seven convicts to attempt an escape (by boat to South America) and transported to NSW. After his return to VDL, he removed to Launceston, married a convict, built and operated the *Cornwall Hotel*, and a horticultural business, and established and edited the *Launceston Advertiser*,

---

[76] James Ross, *The Hobart Town Almanack, for the Year 1829. With six copper plate engravings* (Hobart Town 1829), p. 157.
[77] James Ross, *Hobart Town Almanack and Van Diemen's Land Annual for 1835* (Hobart Town 1835), p. 47.
[78] *Launceston Advertiser*, 31 May 1830, p. 1.
[79] *The Independent*, 25 August 1832, p. 1.
[80] Founders and Survivors, 'Henry Clayton', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31060409.

before departing for Port Phillip in 1835, where he was instrumental in the settlement of Victoria.[81]

In 1832, Fawkner had purchased an imported carriage to operate out to Longford, and considered this would be 'the first Chariot ever attempted to be run in Launceston'.[82] He advertised what is presumably therefore the first stage-coach to be run in the north of the Island (June 1833), between booking offices at Mr Heaney's, Perth and the *Cornwall Hotel* in Launceston,[83] and held a monopoly until John Edward Cox (see Chapter 4) entered upon the route some ten months later.[84]

Cox coordinated his schedule with his carriage of the mail between Perth and Launceston, and also provided a connecting service out to Longford,[85] which was quickly matched by 'Fawkner's Van … to be called "THE INDEPENDENT" being unconnected with the Government, and SUPPORTED BY THE PEOPLE!!'.[86] Fawkner, a strong supporter of the ex-convicts and opponent of government, resented the commercial advantage conferred by the mail contract, and used his connections with the newspaper to turn competition on the road into a political cause. He increased his capacity on the route with an eighteen passenger omnibus built in Launceston; and with a view to customer service, provided newspapers, a small, on-board library (one of his other ventures was a 'circulating library')[87] and table.[88]

Thus Fawkner was a free settler who locally became a convict, and although married, his seventeen-year old, convict bride was unlikely to have brought business skills and experience to the partnership. His network certainly remained strongly convict oriented, and his attitudes and actions were hostile to the government. Indeed, as Hobart Town was then referred to as the 'seat of government',[89] it is reasonable to assume that Fawkner's relocation to Launceston was, in part, to distance himself from authority. Perhaps further removing himself to Port Phillip was an extension of that

---

[81] Hugh Anderson, 'Fawkner, John Pascoe (1792–1869)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne, 1966).
[82] *The Independent*, 22 December 1832, p. 3.
[83] Ibid., 29 June 1833, p. 1.
[84] *Launceston Advertiser*, 10 April 1834, p. 1.
[85] *The Independent*, 12 April 1834, p. 1.
[86] *Launceston Advertiser*, 10 April 1834, p. 2.
[87] Ibid., 30 January 1834, p. 1.
[88] *The Independent*, 26 April 1834, p. 2.
[89] eg see J. Franklin, 'C.O. 280/77, Despatch 23, 4 March', (1837), p. 326.

same sentiment. Nevertheless, he certainly displayed initiative, organisational skills, and a market and customer focus, which, but for his departure to the mainland, might have been a benefit to the local stage-coach and hospitality industry. As it was, his local involvement was only a stepping-stone in the furtherance of his ambitions.

Influenced by its significance as a crossing point over the South Esk on the main line of road south to Hobart Town, northern branch development initially centred upon Perth. In the vacuum left by Fawkner's departure, Joseph Moore commenced a daily return service, using the *Perseverance* coach and another conveyance, from Richard Ruffin's *Coach and Horses* in Launceston, to Perth, and coordinated the schedule with those of the mail- and stage-coaches which were being established on the main road.[90]

This must have prompted Ruffin to begin his own twice-weekly, service between Launceston and Perth using a 'Palanquin Carriage'.[91] During the season, the carriage was also used in Launceston for theatre-goers, and at the end of the season, Ruffin intended to upgrade to a daily return service to Perth. The theatre traffic is another example of the use of coaches for excursions or 'specials' outside of the regular schedules, which increased potential revenue and wove the passenger transport services into the social fabric of the colony's developing leisure industry.

The next competitor on the route, and onwards to Longford, was Benjamin Hyrons, who had been transported in 1818 for forging banknotes.[92] His financial crime was of a different category from those of his labouring and artisan fellow convicts, and so presumably was his skillset. Hyrons' marital circumstances were also highly irregular. He and his wife Amelia, who had been his accomplice in passing fraudulent currency, were both sentenced to death, but instead were transported: Benjamin to Hobart Town and Amelia to Sydney. They were not reunited, and despite the authorities being aware of their situation, Amelia bigamously remarried in Sydney.[93]

---

[90] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 11 April 1835, p. 1.
[91] *Launceston Advertiser*, 1 October 1835, p. 2.
[92] Founders and Survivors, 'Benjamin Hines [Hyrons]', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31180097.
[93] G. Squires, 'Benjamin Hyrons: Shoemaker, convict, storekeeper, innkeeper and stage coach proprietor', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, Vol. 24 (1977), pp. 66-67.

Without divorce, the VDL authorities subsequently allowed Benjamin to marry Sophia Wood, the housekeeper of a man by whom she had a child, and the mother of Benjamin's son, born about a year before they married. This second marriage lasted just three years, during which Benjamin received a conditional pardon, before Sophia died. Next, Benjamin married Mahala Hedditch, daughter of a publican, and Benjamin too became licensee of several inns in Hobart Town, before the couple removed to Launceston, presumably financed by the disposal of a considerable amount of property, which Benjamin had amassed in New Norfolk and Hobart Town.[94]

Raising capital was an essential step in starting up a coaching enterprise, and Hyrons seems to have benefited from the property of his second wife. Third wife, Mahala, provided managerial support for her husband's various inn-keeping and transport ventures, including the *Freemasons Hotel* in George Town and the *Three Grand Masters* in Launceston (which suggest another network), until her death in 1862, whereupon Hyrons married again to a (propertied?) widow.[95]

It is curious that two, colonial stage-coach associated women (the other was Mahala Mills *ante*) had the unusual, Old Testament name 'Mahala'.[96] However, at that time, 'Mahala' was also a name used by Quakers. Only one Hedditch (Samuel) was listed as a convict.[97] Mahala's father was Elijah, therefore free, and that he was a licensee probably precludes the Society of Friends from consideration. Nevertheless, a supportive sectarian religious network is suggested, perhaps Jewish, although Benjamin Hyrons appears to have been baptised a Christian.[98] In looking for networks, this example perhaps suggests that within the complex colonial religious mix, networks could exist across, and not merely within, religions and sects.

In 1838, the *Cornwall Chronicle* advised readers that it had made an arrangement with Benjamin Hyrons, as proprietor of the *Morning Star* stage-coach, to

---

[94] Ibid., p. 68.
[95] Ibid., p. 69.
[96] '1760 BC, Esau marries Mahalah, a daughter of Ishmael, Genesis XXVIII 6-9, Arabia' in Alfred Radford Symonds, *The Holy Bible Arranged in Chronological and Historical Order and Harmonised ...* 2nd ed. (Madras1848).
[97] Founders and Survivors, 'Samuel Hedditch', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31180128.
[98] Squires, 'Benjamin Hyrons: Shoemaker, convict, storekeeper, innkeeper and stage coach proprietor', p. 66.

deliver the newspapers to agents in Perth and Longford. Hyrons then sold a half-share in the *Morning Star* concern to Goodman Hart, who was to reside in Longford to provide closer management in that locale.[99] Hart had been transported for larceny; Hyrons' convict network partnership with him lasted only months, as Hart was sentenced in Launceston to two years with hard labour in October of the same year.[100]

Ruffin too reached out to Longford, using his four-horse coach, the *Fair Play*, (bought from the Austins?), with a daily return service from Longford (William Dodery's, *Mitre Tavern)* to the *Coach and Horses*, Launceston, the license for which had passed from Ruffin to Joseph Thorn,[101] who was possibly a London labourer, transported in 1821 for stealing from a Post [Office].[102]

In March 1839, Benjamin Hyrons commenced the first land conveyance for passengers from Launceston to George Town using a two-horse van.[103] This land option, subject to road conditions, was an improvement on an existing Cox-Captain Scott ferry option for through passengers from Hobart Town to link with shipping departures. Squires stated that Hyrons might have been running the George Town route in the previous year, but his reference (*Cornwall Chronicle*, 22 June 1838, p4) does not exist as the newspaper was not printed on that day, nor does the information seem to be available in proximate issues of that newspaper or of the *Launceston Advertiser*.[104]

For a while, Benjamin Hyrons adopted a less prominent role, as he concentrated more on his hospitality, than his coaching ventures. However, he remained a technological and economic innovator, lighting his *Angel Inn* with gas, the expense of which, 'after the original cost for apparatus, &c., is less than that incurred by burning sperm oil'. [105] Hyrons was intermittently involved in the further

---

[99] NORFOLK PLAINS STAGE, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 27 October 1838, p. 2, and 5 January 39, p. 4.
[100] Founders and Survivors, 'Goodman Hart', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31220361.
[101] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 19 September 1840, p. 4.
[102] Founders and Survivors, 'Joseph Thorn', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31420181. (The last word is indecipherable in the text, but 'Office' seems the most likely).
[103] *Colonial Times*, 5 March 1839, p. 7.
[104] Squires, 'Benjamin Hyrons: Shoemaker, convict, storekeeper, innkeeper and stage coach proprietor', p. 70, and note 49, in ibid., p. 75.
[105] GAS, in *Launceston Examiner*, 29 October 1845, p. 4.

development and conduct of the northern branch routes, but was also instrumental in enterprises on the main line of road. Therefore, his activities will be largely reserved for the following two chapters.

Northern branch services were developmental, as existing routes were extended, particularly along the road to Westbury and beyond. Data at Appendix A shows numerous small enterprises formed, competed, amalgamated, failed or succeeded, but to avoid the semblance of a business catalogue or register, only a small selection of the more enduring operators will be described here.

By early 1847, the northern branch feeders were as follows:

John Morrison, probably a convict transported for stealing in a dwelling house, who had been assigned to the good influences of Thomas Anstey, the Oatlands magistrate, had a good record, and had received a conditional pardon,[106] ran a conveyance from his inn, the *Royal Oak* in Evandale, to Launceston.[107]

William Dodery, a free settler, ran the *Wonder*, out to his *Blenheim Hotel* at Longford from Greenbank's *Enfield Hotel*, in Launceston.[108] Dodery and his wife Grace became well-established as licensees of various inns in the neighbourhood across a quarter-century. With a view to the progressive development of transport services, Dodery was a founding member of the board of the Launceston and Western Railway Company. He was also a Parliamentarian and racehorse breeder, who ultimately chaired the extraordinary meeting which resolved to wind up the railway company.[109]

Free settler, Daniel O'Donnell, had been conducting a coach service to Westbury for some time, but citing the burden of his increasing business as a licensed victualler in Launceston, tried to exit the operational side of coaching on the Westbury road, and during 1848 offered his plant for sale.[110]

---

[106] Founders and Survivors, 'John Morrison', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31290512.
[107] CONVEYANCE FROM AND TO EVANDALE.- JOHN MORRISON, in *Launceston Examiner*, 2 January 1847, p. 8.
[108] CONVEYANCE TO LONGFORD. W. DODERY, in ibid.
[109] Brian R. Chamberlain, *The Launceston and Western Railway Company Ltd., 1867-1904* (Launceston, 1985), pp. 53-57.
[110] A FIRST RATE OPPORTUNITY OF MAKING A FORTUNE, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 1 April 1848, p. 1.

> Richard Ruffin was still running the *Fair Play*, although he had been obliged to dismiss his driver, Mr Solomons, (*sic*) due to a 'want of courtesy'. In mid-year, Ruffin presumably exited the coaching business as his plant was auctioned in Perth, and Solomon was a buyer.[111]

The sales of O'Donnell's and Ruffin's enterprises both offer an indication of scale: each operated two coaches and about twenty horses; their businesses remained viable in the face of competition; their enterprises were integrated with their inn-keeping ventures; and they were family concerns, which cushioned the wages bill. They limited their ambitions on the road, and survived despite the fluctuations of the island's economy. John Morrison, the only convict in this group, did likewise; however, that might have been due to the practical support and settling influence of his wife who took over the enterprise after his death.

Ruffin's dismissal of David Solomon was the result of Solomon's altercation at the Longford punt with William Dodery, Ruffin's rival on the road. After Solomon had allegedly overtaken Dodery's *Wonder* on the road (Dodery was a passenger), he then refused Dodery's request to pull his coach forward to allow the *Wonder* onto the punt to permit both coaches to cross at the same time. In so doing, Solomon was alleged to have 'made use of the most violent, abusive and obscene language ever uttered, threatening vengeance on all around him for being detained'.[112] In reply, Solomon asserted that he was known 'to be a man not at all addicted to bad language, but my irritation was extreme, when Mr. Dodery, in a most insulting manner, told me "my father" was a "Convict" and used further taunting expressions'.[113]

Alison Alexander noted the extreme caution taken by VDL society to avoid the use of the term 'convict', pointing out also that there was no term for an ex-convict: expiree and emancipist were terms used in NSW, but not in VDL.[114] VDL society exercised a pretence of convict invisibility, necessary because of the very high proportion of convicts and ex-convicts within the population. So Dodery's outburst,

---

[111] THE " FAIR PLAY" TO PERTH AND LONGFORD. - RICHARD RUFFIN, in *Launceston Examiner*, 20 March 1847, p. 8, and 28 July 47, p. 7.
[112] THE COACHES TO LAUNCESTON, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 12 December 1846, p. 660.
[113] Letter, To the Editor of the Cornwall Chronicle, D. Solomon, in ibid., 16 December 1846, p. 971.
[114] Alison Alexander, *Tasmania's convicts : how felons built a free society* (Crows Nest, NSW., 2010), pp. 82-83.

while exhibiting what was really felt beneath the surface, broke an unwritten code of behaviour. Nevertheless, Dodery, being what Alexander called 'always free',[115] was at one end of a stratified society within which the actions of proprietors and managers were constrained.

By 1849, David Solomon was in dispute with Benjamin Hyrons, who was again operating coaches in the Longford area, and who announced that Solomon was no longer in his employ, and that John Hyrons had 'full charge of the coach'.[116] Hyrons was the owner of the coach, and Solomon merely the operator or coordinator, although he had been misrepresenting himself as the proprietor. John Hyrons (John Wood) was Benjamin's son by his second wife, Sophia.[117]

Solomon quickly responded by informing the public that he had recently introduced his *Morning Star* stage coach onto the route, which he was about to replace with a new coach called the *Terror* (perhaps aptly named given his reputation for furious driving, colourful language and fiery relationships), and emphasised that he had 'no connection whatever with Benjamin Hyrons'.[118] Perhaps Solomon received some counsel, because his next advertisement called his new coach the *Teazer*.[119] However, if Solomon did receive some counsel, it did not reduce his anger. He was, shortly afterwards, involved in a furious driving incident with 'the Comet coach … driven by Mr. Hyrons the proprietor', found guilty, and fined £5 plus costs.[120]

Worse was to follow. During much of that time, Solomon had been a declared insolvent, but further distinguished himself by his 'being the first case of an alleged fraudulent bankrupt being brought under the cognizance of a Police Magistrate in the colony'.[121] The ownership of the coaches was the fraudulent matter at issue. David Solomon had declared himself a coach proprietor and insolvent, but listed his assets to

---

[115] Ibid., p. 71.
[116] NOTICE, B. HYRONS, in *Launceston Examiner*, 21July 1849, p. 2.
[117] Squires, 'Benjamin Hyrons: Shoemaker, convict, storekeeper, innkeeper and stage coach proprietor', p. 67.
[118] NOTICE, D. SOLOMON, in *Launceston Examiner*, 1 August 1849, p. 7.
[119] ALTERATION OF TIME. - D. SOLOMON, in ibid., 25 August 1849, p. 7.
[120] SAVINGS AND DOINGS AT THE LONGFORD POLICE OFFICE. CHARGE OF FURIOUS DRIVING, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 27 October 1849, pp. 966-67.
[121] POLICE SUMMARY. Important Case. Fraudulent Insolvent, in ibid., 1 December 1849 , pp.1051-52.

a total value of only about £15, with no mention of any stage-coach; and, in another example of the utility of family networks, Solomon's brother was embroiled in the obfuscation.

Thus in a short time, Solomon, son of a convict,[122] came into conflict with Dodery (always free), Ruffin (free descendant of Norfolk Islanders), Hyrons (convict), and finally his creditors and the establishment as represented by the Police Magistrate. However, before that time the first three had all been prepared to employ him. Solomon might have been a product of the VDL colonial environment, or simply an irascible man in any age, regardless of his background and situation; but given the apparently lower success rate of former convicts within the stage-coach entrepreneurs, the following section will examine a niche within which former convicts seemed to operate more successfully.

Omnibuses

An omnibus was but one example of a design of vehicle employed as a stage-coach, but was one which was particularly suited for large numbers of passengers carried over short journeys. Accordingly, its utility placed it into a short-haul or intra-urban, sub-category where its employment challenged the legal boundaries between stage-coaches and hackney cabs. Eventually, the term 'omnibus' became synonymous with suburban public transport, but that was a developmental process, which also differed in time and approach between the north and south of the island.

The urban spread of Hobart Town initially consisted of ribbon development to the north along the main line of road and predated the spread of Launceston. However, population was not sufficient to support a cheap, suburban alternative to cabs until around 1849. Thomas Todd Cooley, a London farrier transported for life for stealing in a dwelling house had received a free pardon in 1843 and commenced, via inn-keeping, an omnibus service between New Town and Hobart Town.[123]

---

[122] There are 17 possibilities for his father, all from London. If his father was also David, he was a hawker, transported for street stealing, with three children and received a free pardon in 1837. Founders and Survivors, 'David Solomon', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31380464.

[123] Founders and Survivors, 'Thomas Cooley', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31060641.

He soon had competition from other former convicts. By 1856, William Francis Goble, a married, Hampshire groom transported for 15 years for horse-stealing[124] was operating the *Surprise* omnibus on the route and coming into conflict with Cooley,[125] who by then was running three (named) omnibuses and significantly undercutting the cabmen's tariffs.[126] The following year (1857), James Horman, a married, Lincolnshire horse-breaker transported for receiving stolen pigs,[127] was also competing on the route, and the omnibus entrepreneurs were attracting the attention of the municipal council for racing, and for not using cabstands.[128]

The Cooleys went on to become a long-standing, family business, but not one without intra-family disputes and competition. The legal status of omnibuses however, continued to be contentious. John T. Cooley was later arraigned before the Mayor of Hobart Town for operating without a licence. Cooley had a stage-coach licence issued by the municipality of Glenorchy to operate between Hobart Town and Launceston, but the Mayor insisted (unsuccessfully) that he was operating an omnibus and not a stage-coach. By then, omnibuses in England came under special regulations, but in Tasmania, the Act still provided only for cabs and stage-coaches.[129] Thus the Mayor lost an opportunity to increase the council's revenue but the incident showed: the increasingly complex nature of the business environment, the need for a regulatory framework, the continuing difficulty in law enforcement, a continued local awareness of English law and practices, and the developing levels of government and responsibility in the, by then, self-governing colony.

Omnibus vehicles, north and south, provided public transport for specials and excursions, but in Launceston a regular passenger, suburban omnibus service did not commence until the introduction of the railway. In 1871, Charles Edwards and John Black announced they had received a licence from the railway company for exclusive

---

[124] Founders and Survivors, 'William Francis Goble', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/ai26826.
[125] OPPOSITION BUSSES, in *Colonial Times*, 16 August 1856, p. 3.
[126] NEW TOWN RACES, in *The Courier*, 9 April 1856, p. 3.
[127] Founders and Survivors, 'James Horman', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31210415.
[128] MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, in *The Courier*, 21 April 1857, p. 3.
[129] UNLICENSED, in *The Mercury*, 19 April 1872, p. 2.

access to the railway station, to and from where their omnibus would carry passengers from around the town, much to annoyance of Launceston cabdrivers. [130]

Even at that late date, both entrepreneurs might have been former convicts: Edwards possibly a married groom from London transported for stealing a carriage wrench; [131] and their successor, William Atkinson was probably a Yorkshire blacksmith convicted of stealing a silk handkerchief.[132] Thus, the intra-urban omnibus services seem to have been predominantly introduced by former convicts, with pre-existing horse-related skills, who were often transported for horse-related crimes. The same-day nature of their services, which did not require any en route change of horses or overnight accommodation at an associated inn, simplified the enterprise business arrangements, and was therefore more easily managed by entrepreneurs with limited capital and lesser business skills.

Conclusion

Therefore in the early development phase of stage-coach branch line services, the optimum business structures drew heavily upon English experience and in a material sense VDL coaching enterprises initially adopted the use of English vehicles and methods. However, the nature of the participants was less easily transcribed.

As Richard White observed of the developing Australian colonies, 'Tasmania was the most English'.[133] James Boyce noted 'that there was more than one Britain', but then concentrated on two sub-sets, namely the propertied and non-propertied, within the context of an imported British class hierarchy.[134] Although some of the stage-coach entrepreneurs went on to become considerable landowners, they were not so at the outset. Boyce's non-propertied types were largely the dispossessed, another group into which the stage-coach entrepreneurs did not fall. If we are to categorise the entrepreneurs, they must be placed somewhere in between.

---

[130] RAILWAY CARS, and MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, in *Launceston Examiner*, 20 May 1871, p. 6 and 30 May 71, p. 3.
[131] Founders and Survivors, 'Charles Edwards', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/ai21276.
[132] Founders and Survivors, 'William Atkinson', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/ai01879.
[133] Richard White, *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity 1688-1980*, The Australian Experience (Sydney, 1981), p. 63.
[134] James Boyce, *Van Diemen's Land* (Melbourne, 2008), p. 6.

Russel Ward was less convinced of the applicability of an imported British class hierarchy, noting: there was no traditional aristocracy; a relatively, very small middle class; that any upper class was in any case really middle class; and that almost all of the lower class were, at least initially, from the convicted criminals.[135] E.P. Thompson considered class a 'historical phenomenon' and not 'a "structure", nor even … a "category"', and went on to say that class was a relationship based on differences associated with legitimate, positional power and/or social role.[136] This description better situates the VDL condition which affected the 'always free', the convicts and the ex-convicts, particularly regarding their relationship with government.

In discussing 'emancipist', George Mackaness noted that the term was rarely used in VDL because unlike as in NSW, there were so few of them when free settlers arrived. The emancipists therefore did not form a separate class as in NSW. (Mackaness' statement is contentious: overall numbers were small, but so too was the total population. Proportionally, former convicts were significant.) Furthermore, a man who had served his full time, was not emancipated, but 'free as he was the day before his conviction'.[137] This, historically more accurate, interpretation of the term reflected the attitudes and influenced the movement of the ex-convicts, and changed over time.

Alison Alexander's earlier discussion of the subject was based on a quotation from 'the anti-transportationist Launceston newspaper, the *Examiner*' in 1850.[138] By then, more ex-convicts had entered the free workforce, with a characteristic 'disinclination to recognise … authority', and a belief in their free status.[139] This statement should be contrasted with Richard Waterhouse's observation that England was in transition from a pre-industrial to an industrial society. Most convicts were drawn from the pre-industrial era, which accepted deference and the rule of law in the maintenance of the traditional order. Also, 'there was no clear demarcation between

---

[135] Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend* (Melbourne, 1966) p. 19 and p. 38.
[136] Thompson, *The making of the English working class*, p. 9 and p. 11.
[137] Note +, in Henry Melville, *The history of the island of Van Diemen's Land, from the year 1824 to 1835 inclusive, to which is added a few words on prison discipline*, ed. George Mackaness, Australiana facsimile editions (Sydney, 1965), p. 15.
[138] Alexander, *Tasmania's convicts : how felons built a free society*, p. 82.
[139] James F Hogan (1880), characteristcs of 'The Coming Australian', in White, *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity 1688-1980*, p. 77, and note 53, p. 186.

home and work, life and work. The family constituted the standard work unit and all members contributed to the tasks required'.[140] Family businesses featured among the more successful enterprises and former convicts might also have appreciated the security of the old order once they had served their time.

Fawkner and Hyrons were such men, and they gravitated towards Launceston. The politics of the anti-transportation movement, various social reform groups, and action towards federation, influenced and affected the stage-coach entrepreneurs increasingly through the 19th century, and was more focused upon Launceston with a more liberal press. The persisting north-south divide reflected a difference in attitudes and networks, as well as a sense of regionality.

E.P. Thompson declared himself a Yorkshireman, and apologised for not including the Scots or Welsh in his work; Boyce noted there was more than one Britain, a point clearly evident in the regional identity of those transported. For instance, Luddism most affected Yorkshire, Lancashire and the Midlands; a convict transported for machine breaking shared ties other than political affiliations.[141] A large proportion of those who failed in the colonial stage-coach industry came from London; however, they were usually described as labourers. Nevertheless, regional identity, as well as skills and circumstance, was a factor in the relationships shared by the stage-coach entrepreneurial 'class', and its importation into VDL explains to some extent a developing congregation upon Launceston, away from the seat of power, with like-minded fellows, and a more entrepreneurial, than bureaucratic (governmental Hobartian) spirit.

However, north or south, the branch and hub structure was developed by the push factor from the region into the hub, rather than by any early desire for the inhabitants of the two towns to travel outwards. Also, the enterprises were usually developed by inn-keepers expanding into the transport business, either as initiators, or as purchasers of purely coach operations, particularly those which used their inns.

A typical, viable stage-coach enterprise was likely to be based upon an inn, and run by a free settler family, owning its coaches, horses and harness. The proprietor was often a driver of the coaches, and his wife the operator of the inn, and

---

[140] Richard Waterhouse, *Private Pleasures, Public Leisure: A History of Australian Popular Culture since 1788* (Melbourne, 1995), p. 4.
[141] Thompson, *The making of the English working class*, p. 529.

probably the real manager of business. As in the early English examples, the route was probably no more than 30 miles, which meant a return trip could be made in a day, and horses could be changed at a mid-point, where passengers might also take refreshments. Such a schedule obviated the need for movement by night, except perhaps on the short winter days. For ease of comparison within the industry, such an arrangement might be described as a medium enterprise. A transport operation without an inn or an en route change of horses might be considered a small enterprise.

Routes such as those from New Norfolk into Hobart Town, and Longford into Launceston had business sufficient to permit competition on the road even from early times. Nevertheless, operators sought to augment their revenue by running excursions or specials for a range of leisure activities. Of the traditional English recreations noted by Richard Waterhouse being taken up in the colonies, attendance at fairs (eg the Hobart Regatta), horse races, and the theatre provided early business opportunities for the coach operators, and sports such as cricket, and even deer hunting followed by mid-century.[142] Other specials were run to country auctions.

The industry provided a public service, but it was one delivered by private enterprise with little government involvement or support. Any philanthropic approach to service provision was very limited at the outset. Settlers came ‘to make money and make money we will by hook or by crook’.[143] Such private ‘ends’ and motivations were probably common to ex-convict as well as ‘always free’, but the settlers had an option of returning home, which was mostly unavailable to the ex-convict.

Finally, to what extent were the early entrepreneurs pioneers? Given the strong English background, equipment, networks, business models and experience available to them, they were not true inventors. However, by introducing amenities and services where they did not previously exist, they certainly demonstrated an ability to seize an opportunity and shape the colony’s economic development; and Fawkner’s introduction of a larger coach, with an on-board library and table was an example of ‘creating ideas that will … put the organisation ahead of its

---

[142] Richard Waterhouse, 'Cultural Transmissions', in *Cultural history in Australia*, ed. Richard White and Hsu-Ming Teo (Sydney, 2003), pp. 117-18.
[143] Letter, Janet Ranken, December 1821, quoted in Boyce, *Van Diemen's Land*, p. 155, and note 48, p. 341.

competitors'.[144] If '"pioneering" was activity in which the probability of failure seemed … high', then the record of stage-coach insolvencies qualified the colonial entrepreneurs as innovators,[145] but competition was a threat for the small and medium enterprises on the branch and intra-urban routes, and was to be even more critical on the main line of road.

[144] Innovating, in Charles Margerison and Dick McCann, *Team Management Systems, an overview* (Toowong, Qld., 1990), p. 2.
[145] Hughes, *The Vital Few: American Economic Progress and its Protagonists*, pp. 4-5.

PART 2 – ENTERPRISES ON THE MAIN LINE OF ROAD

CHAPTER 4

THE COX ENTERPRISE

Butlin regarded 1830 as a turning point in Australian settlement; before that date there was perhaps an over-emphasis on convictism and insufficient attention paid to age, sex, and workforce skills and structure: the full demographic picture was not adequately considered, the 'population … was in the process of quite dramatic change' and by the 1840s there was a 'strong synergism between the two [free or convict] societies'.[1] In determining the nature, origin and background of the participants in the VDL stage-coach industry, the period either side of the 1830 transition point is therefore instructive.

The ends, ways and means of government and private enterprise should, desirably, have been aligned, but were not always so, nor were their respective priorities. While government pursued its objectives, private enterprises had to seek their opportunities within the developing government regulatory framework and manage around the uncertainties of the emerging colonial economy. Aspiring transport entrepreneurs would have to determine and establish business structures best suited to adapt to the changing circumstances, and the free-settler, Cox family were perhaps the most successful VDL stage-coach pioneers in doing so.

Mary Ann and John Edward Cox were among the 1820s wave of free settlers who arrived in the penal colony of VDL in the expectation of receiving land grants. The couple came from near Clare in Suffolk, where John Edward had been raised by his uncle, an auctioneer. Mary Ann's father had died within a year of her birth and her mother had remarried, to a surgeon.[2] Therefore, Mary Ann probably received some education in a comfortable, middle-class home until her stepfather died when she was

---

[1] N.G. Butlin, *Forming a Colonial Economy, Australia 1810-1850* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 4.

[2] Judith Carter and Don Bradmore, 'English Novelist Anna Maria Wight: tracing her connection to a remarkable Tasmanian family', *Tasmanian Ancestry*, June 2015, pp. 35-43.

14 years old. Her circumstances between then and her marriage are unknown, but presumably her stepfather left his widow and Mary Ann's four younger stepsiblings with some means.

Despite coming from the same neighbourhood, John Edward and Mary Ann chose to marry in Bristol, which was over 200 miles away from home. Furthermore, Mary Ann was married on the day after her twenty-first birthday, when she would not have required parental permission. Shortly after their wedding, the Coxes sailed for VDL and arrived in Hobart Town just over eight months later.[3] Mary Ann gave birth to twins three months after landing.[4] It is possible that Mary Ann's mother had withheld her permission to marry, on account of Mary Ann's situation as a stepchild in the household and a useful, domestic help and child minder. Whatever, Mary Ann's particular childhood circumstances would have shaped her character and influenced her skills and abilities.

George Hawley Stancombe recorded the couple arrived with capital and a letter of recommendation and received a grant of land, but did not prosper and were obliged to sell their land and stock in an adverse market.[5] Seven years after landing, John Edward Cox was a 'prisoner in custody' as a declared insolvent;[6] but his singular, legal liability gave no indication of Mary Ann's roles in the matrimonial, business partnership.

The Coxes were not as impoverished as Stancombe implied because their ventures were quite diversified. For instance, Cox was licensed to operate a ferry-boat at New Norfolk, and supplied meat to the commissariat.[7] Their agricultural venture had suffered a setback when their thatched home was burnt down,[8] no doubt testing the young family's resilience. The insolvency was quickly and fully discharged by Cox selling off his Cascade Saw Mills, two properties in New Norfolk,[9] and the ferry,

---

[3] "SHIP NEWS, in *Hobart Town Gazette and Van Diemen's Land Advertiser*, 10 November 1821, p. 2.
[4] Ibid., 2 February 1822, p. 2.
[5] G.H. Stancombe, 'Cox, John Edward (1791-1837)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne, 1966).
[6] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 31 May 1828, p. 2.
[7] *Hobart Town Gazette and Van Diemen's Land Advertiser*, 4 January 1823, p. 2 and 11 January 1823, p. 1.
[8] *The Tasmanian & Port Dalrymple Advertiser*, 12 January 1825, p. 2.
[9] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 14 February 1829, p. 3 and 27 September 1828, p. 2.

which realised £800.[10] Cox resumed auctioneering, and the couple opened a general importing and merchandising store,[11] which included specialised horse equipment.

They had formed useful networks from their time of arrival in VDL, including a partnership with Richard Lewis,[12] who was the government auctioneer, a substantial merchant, and a founding proprietor of the Bank of Van Diemen's Land.[13] The Lewis and Cox families later developed an inter-married relationship. The Coxes could therefore have called upon some government, commercial and financial, influence and support: perhaps also, some forewarning of where business opportunities might arise. Their auctioneering network also included J.T. Collicott,[14] then farmer of the mail contract.

Immediately after discharging the insolvency, the *Colonial Times* welcomed the Coxes' tenancy of the 'elegant and well-frequented' *Macquarie Hotel*, believing 'both Mr. and Mrs Cox every way competent to conduct such an establishment'.[15] The newspaper's inclusion and approval of Mary Ann was indicative. Very quickly, the hotel mounted a dinner and entertainment for the colonial establishment from both town and country, which marked the first such 'union of the agricultural and commercial interests':[16] a precursor of the colonial clubs, and an enlargement of the Coxes' already varied networks.

In 1830, when Augustus Prinsep stepped ashore after his voyage from Batavia to find accommodation in Hobart Town, he remarked that 'the climax of pleasures awaited us at the end of our walk, a blazing fire, tea, toast, and exquisite butter at the Macquarie Hotel'.[17] Although John Edward Cox was the licensee of the *Macquarie Hotel*, such attention to ease and comfort was surely the purview of his wife.

---

[10] *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 16 April 1829, p. 3.
[11] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 27 October 1827, p. 2.
[12] *Hobart Town Gazette and Van Diemen's Land Advertiser*, 14 September 1822, p. 2.
[13] Hubert C. Lewis, 'Lewis, Richard (1789–1867)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne, 1967).
[14] *Hobart Town Gazette and Van Diemen's Land Advertiser*, 31 March 1827, p. 1.
[15] *Colonial Times*, 27 February 1829, p. 2.
[16] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 14 March 1829, p. 3.
[17] Mrs Augustus Prinsep, *Illustrations of Prinsep's Journal of a voyage from Calcutta to Van Diemen's Land : from original sketches taken during the years 1829 and 1830* (London, 1833), p. 51.

Mary Ann later hosted 'an entertainment which should exceed all which had ever been before seen in the Colony' for the racing stewards' dinner.[18] On that occasion the credit was unambiguously hers, as her husband was absent in England for fifteen months.[19] Therefore, within the print record, while John Edward Cox was named as proprietor of the ventures, Mary Ann Cox also began to receive recognition. She was a member of the colonial networks in her own right, and her husband's return to England demonstrated his confidence in her ability to manage the family businesses.

By the beginning of the 1830s, and despite a number of setbacks, the free-settler Cox family had thus established themselves in VDL. Their private enterprises showed their determination to prosper and they had acquired some of the ways (networks and organisation) and means (capital and equipment) to enable them to do so.

The 'Main Road'

The development of stage-coach services on the main line of road could have resulted from the progressive extension of the branch routes out of the two hubs, but this was not the case. Whereas hub and branch traffic was prompted by population demand from the regions, the impetus for transport services between Hobart Town and Launceston came initially from government, business and primarily communications requirements.

Lieutenant Laycock 'with a party of four Men and three Weeks' Provision each' were the first recorded white men to travel overland from Launceston to Hobart Town (3 February 1807, arriving 11 February).[20] At least some elements of Laycock's journal were written after the completion of the journey but the official report of the expedition did not specifically say how the party was transported.[21] From the description of the terrain, it is reasonable to assume the journey was on foot, but the supplies might have been carried at least part of the way on horseback. However, the

---

[18] *Colonial Times*, 22 March 1831, p. 2.
[19] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 30 July 1831, p. 2.
[20] 'Memorandums of a Journey from Port Dalrymple to the River Derwent', journal of Thomas Laycock, Lieut of the NSW Corps', in Frederick Watson, *Historical Records of Australia. Series III., Despatches and papers relating to the settlement of the states* (Sydney, 1921), Vol 1, pp. 745-7.
[21] Ibid., note 367, p. 847.

Reverend Knopwood stated: 'they were 9 days from the settlement but 7 walking it'.[22] The final part of the journey was completed by river from Herdsman's Cove, where Laycock 'found Mr Bates … who furnished me with a Boat to take me to the Settlement'.[23]

Lieutenant Edward Lord, giving evidence to a parliamentary inquiry in London, described the first vehicular journey from Hobart Town to Launceston during which 'a loaded cart was drawn without the necessity of felling a tree'.[24] John West quoted this journey immediately after describing Laycock's arrival in Hobart, implying the cart travelled in 1807, and making it the first wheeled transport between the two settlements.[25] Stancombe linked Lord's statement to a journey in 1809,[26] but from Lord's testimony it is not possible to say more than that the journey pre-dated 1812.

Walking considerable distances was commonplace. For example, the Reverend Knopwood 'went across the river and walkd [*sic*] to the Coal River, 12 miles into the country'.[27] The early mail was carried on foot, but the use of horses was soon introduced. Initially, despatch riders (eg 'Messrs. Stocker and Richardson') were used when required.[28] Later, a bi-weekly government messenger left 'either Hobart

---

[22] Robert Knopwood, Mary Nicholls, and Tasmanian Historical Research Association, *The diary of the Reverend Robert Knopwood, 1803-1838 : first chaplain of Van Diemen's Land* (Sandy Bay, Tas., 1977), entry for 11 February 1807, p. 126.
[23] Watson, *Historical Records of Australia. Series III., Despatches and papers relating to the settlement of the states*, Vol 1, p. 747.
[24] Evidence of Lieutenant Edward Lord, in House of Commons, *Report from the Select Committee on Transportation* (London, Parliamentary papers / House of Commons, 1812), p. 79.
[25] John West and A.G.L. Shaw, *The History of Tasmania : with copious information respecting the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia &c., &c., &c*, Australian classics (Sydney, 1981), p. 36.
[26] George Hawley Stancombe, *Highway in Van Diemen's Land* (Glendessary, Western Junction, Tas., 1968), p. 4. (However, the journey described by Stancombe was from Launceston to Hobart [HRA, op cit, p. 696] and pre-dated the instruction which Stancombe suggested was the reason for the journey [HRA, op cit, p. 699]. Nevertheless, 'a Cart with 4 Oxen' was ordered to Hobarttown in 1809 to bring baggage to Launceston [HRA, op cit, p. 700].)
[27] Knopwood, Nicholls, and Tasmanian Historical Research Association, *The diary of the Reverend Robert Knopwood, 1803-1838 : first chaplain of Van Diemen's Land*, p. 160.
[28] *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 3 August 1816.

Town or Launceston every Sunday morning alternately' before a weekly service was announced with effect from 8 May 1820.[29]

Laycock's route south was close to a compass line between the coordinates of the two settlements, and therefore crossed the highland lakes region. His return followed a longer route via the valleys up into the midlands, which became the preferred line for road development as settlers moved into those areas. This eastern line was also followed and favoured for development by Governor Macquarie during his second visit.[30] The highland lakes route would have required more clearing than the lower line, which, since the cart passed without a tree being felled, crossed more open grassland. Also, the highland route would have been difficult in winter. A range of factors, both overall and local, therefore drove the line of route away from a purely military, shortest, straight line.

One consideration was security from attack by Aborigines. The Reverend Knopwood mentioned the Stoney (Serpentine) Valley near Spring Hill, where 'should you meet with the natives, you must inevitably lose your life';[31] the valley was not chosen for the main line of road. By the time of the Black Line campaign, the precise line of road was still not fully decided, and the threat from Aborigines, whether real or perceived, persisted. In 1830, the Prinseps provided themselves with guns for their journey through the 'dark woods' north of Oatlands to counter the 'attacks of bush-rangers, or natives'.[32] However, as Butlin observed, from a business perspective after 1830 'Protection became progressively less important as Aboriginal risks were diminished'.[33]

Before that time, carters were operating on the route. Matthew McMahan advertised his road waggon (bullock) for a seasonal summer haulage service in

---

[29] Ibid., 26 October 1816 and 6 May 1820.
[30] Lachlan Macquarie and Phyllis Mander-Jones, *Lachlan Macquarie, Governor of New South Wales : journals of his tours in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land 1810-1822* (Sydney, 1956), passim.
[31] Knopwood, Nicholls, and Tasmanian Historical Research Association, *The diary of the Reverend Robert Knopwood, 1803-1838 : first chaplain of Van Diemen's Land*, entry for 27 March 1814.
[32] Prinsep, *Illustrations of Prinsep's Journal of a voyage from Calcutta to Van Diemen's Land : from original sketches taken during the years 1829 and 1830*, p. 89.
[33] Butlin, *Forming a Colonial Economy, Australia 1810-1850*, p. 154.

1824;[34] and by 1830, William Cutts and William Shaw offered 'Covered Vans for the conveyance of passengers and goods at any time to any part of the colony', ie vehicles for hire, rather than a service for separate fare paying passengers, and were 'carriers from Hobart-town to Launceston and intermediate places'.[35] They proposed a two van, goods and passenger service rendezvousing half way, and the journey was to be complete in four days as horses were to be used;[36] but during the following year, Cutts's van was transporting convict women from Richmond around the Midlands, so presumably the main road service did not commence.[37]

A requirement for postal communications between Hobart Town and Launceston provided one impetus for transport development on the main line of road, and initially it was spare capacity, which prompted the carriage of passengers. This chapter will examine the effect of postal requirements and consequent government contracts upon the introduction of stage-coach enterprises on the main road, and how one settler family responded to the challenges of the colonial economy in a pioneering environment.

The Historiography of the Mail Cart

A scheduled coach service between Hobart Town and Launceston, operating along similar lines to the postal service, whose mail contract it was expected to pick up, was the intended purpose for two omnibuses brought out by John Webb in 1831.[38] Several investors expressed interest in the venture, which was calculated to need about 40 horses 'to be contributed at the different stages by settlers' along the route.[39] This venture stalled, due to the 'lamented' death of Webb, and, although the coaches were offered for sale, the purchasers did not use them to open a service to Launceston.[40] The introduction of a stage-coach to the route was to occur incrementally.

---

[34] *Hobart Town Gazette and Van Diemen's Land Advertiser*, 15 October 1824, p. 4.
[35] *Launceston Advertiser*, 18 October 1830, p. 1.
[36] Ibid., 22 November 1830, p. 2.
[37] *Colonial Times*, 10 August 1831, p. 3.
[38] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 11 June 1831, p. 3.
[39] Ibid., 18 June 1831, p. 4.
[40] Ibid., 17 December 1831, p. 3; 21 January 1832, p. 3; 4 February 1832, p. 1.

According to Adnum, the Colonial Secretary's Office's request for tender 'for the conveyance of the Mails from Hobart town to Launceston',[41] with effect from June 1832 was awarded to Henry Nickolls, at £990 pa, with the option of carrying one passenger.[42] K.A. Green confirmed that Nickolls was the lowest, and therefore preferred, tenderer,[43] and that the Executive Council approved the recommendation.[44] Lloyd Robson made no mention of Nickolls, ascribing the 1832 service entirely to John Edward Cox, who 'continued the service for seventeen years';[45] however, Cox died five years later (1837). John Richardson ascribed the single-passenger, mail-cart service to Mary Ann Cox.[46] Despite this lack of clarity in the historiography, in late 1832, the 'contractor' advertised that the carts would have space for two passengers, commencing on 16 November,[47] and early next year Nickolls was seeking 'a Free Man' to drive the mail carts.[48] Nickolls therefore did establish his contracted service.

Concurrent with the award of the contract to Nickolls, John Edward Cox, one of the unsuccessful tenderers, commenced a weekly mail cart service between Hobart Town and Launceston using a 'tandem', aimed at carrying the packages of 'Bankers, Solicitors, Merchants, and Tradesmen'.[49] Adnum suggested that the increasing volume of newspapers being carried drove Cox's initiative;[50] but it is equally possible that the carriage of important documents by illiterate, convict post messengers was not appealing to professionals, especially as the service had suffered robberies and losses.

Cox drove his cart, and offered to carry one passenger at £5 per journey. The *Launceston Advertiser* commended Cox's inaugural safe and punctual arrival (July

---

[41] Government Notice No 82, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 14 April 1832, p. 154.
[42] V.B. Adnum, *A History of the Post Office in Tasmania* (Hobart, 1975), p. 15.
[43] CSO 1/126/3105, pp. 167-71, in K.A Green, 'Lieutenant-Governor Arthur and the Establishment of the Post Office', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, Vol. 12, no. 1 (1964), p. 30 and note 31.
[44] EC 2/2 pp. 240-44, in ibid., p. 30 and note 32.
[45] L.L. Robson, *A History of Tasmania. Volume I., Van Diemen's Land from the earliest times to 1855* (Melbourne, 1983), p. 267.
[46] John I. Richardson, *A history of Australian travel and tourism* (Melbourne, 1999), p. 36.
[47] *Colonial Times*, 20 November 1832, p. 1.
[48] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 22 February 1833, p. 1.
[49] *Launceston Advertiser*, 26 June 1832, p. 4.
[50] Adnum, *A History of the Post Office in Tasmania*, p. 18.

1832), which had 'led to considerable betting among the sporting gentry'.[51] As this pre-dated Nickolls' advertisement of passenger spaces, and was within one month of Nickolls' required start date, it is probable that Cox carried the first separate fare-paying passenger on the route, in a mail cart, but not the mail cart which held the mail contract.

Chief Justice Pedder was an early passenger on a mail cart. His 'experience thus derived as to the real condition of the roads,' the *Colonial Times* hoped, 'will tend infinitely more towards their being a little better attended to than at present, than all the writing, scolding, and grumbling of editors, settlers and others, for a whole twelvemonth'.[52] As a government official, Pedder likely used Nickolls' contract service, but both operators were options at that time. Since Nickolls seems to have defaulted on the contract shortly afterwards, it is possible Pedder also used the opportunity to gain a perspective for the government of Nickolls' operation.

In early 1833, the *Colonial Times* could say with some satisfaction:

> To those whose business is urgent, the mail affords the opportunity of crossing the Island in l8 hours; and to Gentlemen and Ladies who may wish to travel in an easy carriage at the rate of 60 miles per day, we beg to recommend Mr. Cox's 4-wheel carriage, which … is a mode of conveyance quicker, easier, and cheaper than on horseback or in a gig, and deserves public encouragement.[53]

Thus the two enterprises provided the option of either a two-horse, four-wheeled vehicle, or one- or two-horse (tandem), two-wheeled carts. However, in April Cox gave notice to the public that only mail was to be carried in his carts by legal requirement.[54] Thus it seems Cox became the sole operator on the route, and must have picked up some of the previous contract through Nickolls' default or partial performance.

When the next request for the mail tender was issued to take effect from October 1833,[55] Cox's tender, at £1295 for twelve months, was successful.[56] This was the contract that Fawkner had resented when Cox commenced his opposition branch

---

[51] *Launceston Advertiser*, 3 July 1832, p. 214.
[52] *Colonial Times*, 8 January 1833, p. 2.
[53] Ibid., 5 February 1833, p. 2.
[54] *Launceston Advertiser*, 25 April 1833, p2.
[55] GOVERNMENT NOTICE. Colonial Secretary's Office, July 2, 1833, in *Colonial Times*, 9 July 1833, p. 4.
[56] Ibid., 20 August 1833, p. 2.

coach services from Perth (*ante* Chapter 3). However, Cox's perceived commercial advantage was short-lived, as he did not win the subsequent (optional, up to three-year)[57] mail contract, despite 'having performed that arduous duty … for the last eighteen months, during which time he has run over forty thousand miles'.[58] Cox's reckoning of eighteen months further supports the view that he took up part of Nickolls' mail contract.

Government therefore used contractors as the preferred way to deliver inland postal services. The contracting entrepreneurs were vulnerable to business failure; yet it was government that suffered the opprobrium from any unreliable service. Government was responsible for the ends but had no direct control over the ways and means, and few fall-back options.

Four-horse Stage-coaches

Following the sale of the New Norfolk ferry, John Edward Cox had fully discharged his earlier insolvency[59] under an English Act (4 Geo IV 96) for the administration of justice in NSW and VDL,[60] and by early 1829 the trustees announced the first dividend.[61] As with the establishment of security in the colony, 1830 was a significant point for colonial legislation regarding insolvency. Cox's insolvency had been administered under the British umbrella act, whereby 'the major part in number and value of the Creditors' had signified their consent to the issue of a certificate for Cox.[62] As this wording exactly reflected VDL's own, later Act, for the issue of a Warrant of Attorney, it meant he had discharged his insolvency and could trade without encumbrance.[63]

---

[57] GN No 203, CSO, dated 16 July 1834, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 18 July 1834, p. 481.
[58] *Launceston Advertiser*, 21 August 1834, p2.
[59] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 14 February 1829, p. 3.
[60] House of Commons, 'A Bill for the better Administration of Justice in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, and for the more effectual Government thereof, and for other purposes', in *Cockton 1823 (522) III.571 mf 25.24-25* (1823), p. 13 (p. 583).
[61] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 14 March 1829, p. 3.
[62] Ibid., 14 February 1829, p. 3.
[63] Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies His Excellency Colonel George Arthur, with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for the Relief of certain Insolvent Debtors', in *11 George IV No 4 (1830)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1830), Section XI.

If the Coxes seemed to have no background for the mail contract, their networks included the farmer of the former mail contract, and town and country financiers and landholders. They were successfully engaged in the inn-keeping business, which so many others used as a foundation for entering the stage-coach industry, auctioneering would have given John Edward the opportunity to gauge and acquire suitable horses and vehicles at opportune prices, and their importing and merchandising business presented similar opportunities for tools and equipment.

The auction of the New Norfolk properties had taken place at George Wise's *Ship Inn*; Wise shortly afterwards joined a New Norfolk coach syndicate (*ante* Chapter 3) and the *Ship Inn* progressively became the principal Hobart Town coach terminus. Cox no doubt, would have used the various New Norfolk coaches to visit his properties there, thus, coincidentally observing the coaching business, and realising that, if he were to enter that business, he would have to look elsewhere for a market. Hence, the Coxes entered the passenger transport industry via the mail-carting business, but moved swiftly towards the large enterprise category. The journey of the venture could not be performed in a day and required some overnight capability and the provision of horses, fodder, food and accommodation en route.

Therefore, once the mail-cart service commenced, the Coxes reorganised the business and logistic arrangements, transferring the licence of the *Macquarie Hotel* to Edmund Hodgson,[64] and buying the *York and Albany Hotel* in Oatlands,[65] for which George Dudfield became licensee.[66] Of all the persons so far mentioned in the Cox networks, only Dudfield was not 'always free'. A pock-marked, married, London publican, of 'Jewish Countenance', Dudfield had been transported for receiving stolen notes, and had just received a conditional pardon.[67] Recalling the British experience, that publicans of wayside inns who received stolen goods often did so from highwaymen whom they sheltered and informed, perhaps Dudfield was not a wise choice, but was one of relatively short duration.

However, the selection of Oatlands as the main, en route staging point was more prescient. Governor Macquarie had recommended the location; during the Black

[64] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 6 July 1832, p. 2.
[65] *Colonial Times*, 2 October 1832, p. 1.
[66] IRO 8 October 1834, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 9 October 1834, p. 748.
[67] Founders and Survivors, 'George Dudfield', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31090382.

Line campaign it had been used as a logistic base, and it was becoming an administrative and pastoral centre. The PMG's request for tender however, nominated Jericho, not Oatlands, as the region's postal, staging/tender point.[68] Oatlands was not the half-way point, either in time or distance, but given the comparative hilliness of the road in the southern sector, and the uncertainty which persisted about the line of road to its north, it became the main stopping point on the road, particularly for the night coaches.

Thus during 1833-34, the Coxes consolidated the mail-cart service, developed passenger services with an overnight stop on the main road, and introduced a four-horse stage-coach branch service between Launceston and Perth coordinated with the mail-cart arrivals and departures. *The Independent* appreciated the regularity of the mail delivery, attributing it to John Edward Cox's 'unceasing and persevering exertions'.[69] The reliability would also have reflected well on one of government's ends, viz provision of the postal service.

Next, no doubt drawing upon experience recently gained, the Post Office strengthened its trading position with the passage of the amending and consolidating *Postage Act (1834)*. The Act stated that it was 'lawful for' the PMG to establish written contracts, but it did not stipulate that the PMG was required to call for tenders.[70] Nevertheless, given the government's concern for open accountability, its consequent policy of tendering and accepting the lowest price, and not factoring in the demonstrated reliability, the Coxes did not regain the mail contract.

Instead, George Sinclair Brodie, 'always free', licensee at Cox-rival Fawkner's relocated Perth office, the *St Andrew's Inn*,[71] and William Cutts were awarded the mail contract for three years from 1834. Cutts, a groom from Derbyshire, transported for highway robbery, was assigned to his wife in 1830, before receiving

---

[68] GN 82, CSO 5 April 1832, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 14 April 1832, p. 154.
[69] *The Independent*, 29 March 1834, p. 3.
[70] His Excellency Colonel George Arthur Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act to amend and consolidate the laws providing for the conveyance and postage of Letters', in *4 William IV No 18 (1834)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1834), Section 26.
[71] Notice No 2, IRO, 8 October 1834, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, p. 748.

his ticket (1833) and a conditional pardon (1835).[72] Therefore, he had some of the necessary equine transport skills and experience, albeit not always on the right side of the law.

Cutts' advertised transport operations commenced from his time of assignment to his wife. Catherine Bishop noted that although convicts could not own property and had few legal rights, 'their wives could be granted land and a publican's licence in their own name, their husbands then being assigned to them as labourers'.[73] In this case, Mrs Cutts was the business proprietor, while her husband drove the vehicles. She does not seem to have been a licensee at that time, but as her death warranted a mention in the colonial press, she must have been a person of some regard, who had a steadying influence upon her husband. By the time of her death, the couple were running the *Black Swan* in Hobart Town.[74]

Brodie & Cutts operated the mail contract for three years, while supplementing their revenue by also carrying passengers between Hobart Town and Launceston. At that time, the rigours of the journey were not to be underestimated. Captain Tregurtha, an experienced mariner, undertook the journey in 1835 recounting: 'On the 26th April I started with the mail, at this time a formidable undertaking with the bush road and night travelling, and arrived at Launceston on the 28th, terribly shaken'.[75]

The Coxes responded by launching a passenger service: the 'Diligence stage coach carrying four inside and twelve outside', which John Edward would drive himself weekly between Hobart Town and Launceston, taking two days in each direction; and recalling their network connections, the Hobart Town terminus was the

---

[72] Founders and Survivors, 'William Cutts', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31060482.
[73] Catherine Bishop, *Minding her own Business: Colonial Businesswomen in Sydney* (Sydney, 2015), p. 24.
[74] THE GAZETTE. INTERNAL REVENUE OFFICE, in *Colonial Times*, 16 October 1838, p. 8 and 15 January 1839, p. 7.
[75] Edward Primrose Tregurtha and Dan Sprod, *The Tregurtha log: relating the adventurous life of Capt. Edward Primrose Tregurtha: the Napoleonic Wars, the East India Company's China run, whaling in the South Seas, shipmaster to the Port Philip district* (Hobart, 1980), p. 108.

Ship Inn.[76] (A *Diligence* was of a similar design to a mail-coach, but with no special provision for a guard.)

At the beginning of October 1834, the *Independent* reported with some disappointment, witnessing 'Mr Cox come in, in fine style … in his four horse coach from Hobart Town'.[77] The weather had been wet and the roads were in a deplorable state, but Cox had been on time within half an hour despite a two-hour delay at the ferry. The newspaper's disappointment might therefore have been because the nostalgic, romantic spectacle, such as at the *Eclipse*'s arrival in Hobart in 1831, had been tarnished by 120 miles of mud, pouring rain and a poor turnout in the dark to witness the return of the first four-horse stage-coach to cross the island.

Without the buffer of the mail contract, and in a passenger market exhibiting little growth, the Coxes' initiative was bold. However, Cox had gained experience on the route and established a reputation, and together the couple had forged links with suppliers (especially for horses and fodder) to support each of the stages and had their own inn in Oatlands as a main, en route logistic base. Additionally, having already operated four-horse stage-coaches in the Launceston-Norfolk Plains district, they had assets and equipment which they could employ. This background would have lessened the need for further capital investment on start-up.

The Coxes opened booking offices at the termini, and assured patrons of suitable arrangements made with 'the Proprietors of the most respectable Taverns on the road' to ensure the convenience of passengers, especially ladies.[78] Given Captain Tregurtha's account of conditions on the road, perhaps their intended business point of difference was passenger ease and comfort. The schedule was achievable with just one coach, but their principal coachbuilder and maintenance provider must have been in Hobart Town, because in early 1835 Cox travelled through the night to allow an extra day to effect improvements to the coach.[79]

Also, mirroring other stage-coach entrepreneurs, the Cox family removed north to Launceston sometime before the middle of 1835, and leased the *Cornwall Hotel* from John Fawkner. Fawkner's anti-transportation beliefs apparently did not

---

[76] *Launceston Advertiser*, 21 August 1834, p. 2.
[77] *The Independent*, 11 October 1834, p. 3.
[78] Ibid., 30 August 1834, p. 1.
[79] *Colonial Times*, 24 February 1835, p. 7.

prevent his employment of convicts, as he also transferred two assignees to Cox, presumably to continue (livery stable?) work at the *Cornwall Hotel*, which became the principal, northern stage-coach terminus.[80] By 1836, Cox was licensee of the *Cornwall Hotel*,[81] and selling horses and plant from there.[82]

At the same time, Cox planned to introduce a second coach onto the main road.[83] The new coach doubled his passenger capacity on the route, but he recognised that load factor was seasonally dependent, pledging only to maintain that level of service during the summer. Also, indicating that this increase in capacity required some capital, he hoped to attract investors to offset 'the cost of so heavy an outlay'.[84] This was a private enterprise appeal to develop a public service, and backers came forward.

Jonathan Hughes spoke of American transport systems at the time being financed through contractual partnerships. He described an 'age of finance capitalism' or 'age of trusts' as vital to the development of great companies, and was dubious of 'the charge of "monopoly power"'.[85] Popular fears of monopoly on the main road would emerge shortly and linger through the colonial stage-coach industry, but a trust was a useful way by which to find the means to deliver the service.

Accordingly, the Coxes raised capital by means of a 'Trust-Deed' and their backers were free-settler, northern landowners.[86] Later a subscription was taken to help them purchase more horses to speed the journey and guarantee the schedule (in difficult road conditions).[87] Thus despite only recently relocating north, the Coxes quickly had free-settler, Launceston networks to support their enterprise. The backers' interest reflected the additional commercial push factor inherent in Launceston, as opposed to the more limited mail concerns of the southern bureaucrats.

---

[80] BOARD OF ASSIGNMENT, September 23rd, 1835… Transfers… in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 3 October 1835, p. 1.
[81] IRO GN No 34, 5 October 1836, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 7 October 1836, p. 996.
[82] TO BE SOLD, A CALCUTTA-BUILT GIG, in *Launceston Advertiser*, 4 August 1836, p. 2.
[83] Ibid., 30 June 1836, p. 3.
[84] Ibid., 29 September 1836, p. 4.
[85] Jonathan Hughes, *The Vital Few: American Economic Progress and its Protagonists* (New York, 1973), p. 11.
[86] *Colonial Times*, 17 November 1840, p. 7.
[87] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 8 July 1837, p. 3.

Arrangements were then made with a carrier 'to provide a weekly conveyance, at the usual charges, for any luggage which may be too heavy for the coach'; and shortly afterwards, a coordinated service with Captain Scott at Launceston, whereby passengers from Hobart Town could proceed down river from Launceston to George Town on the mornings following the arrival of the coach, was introduced.[88] This latter initiative offered two opportunities per week for southern travellers to join vessels out of the north of the island for Port Phillip, Sydney, or elsewhere, thereby saving time, and offering a better guarantee of schedule and safer passage than might be taken from Hobart Town. It also provided potential overnight patrons for the Coxes' *Cornwall Hotel*.

At the next request for tender, Cox won back the mail contract[89] from Brodie & Cutts, who sought to dispose of their mail and 'carrying concerns, consisting of 40 superior harness horses; 3 mail carts … 1 Prussian phaeton, to carry 9 passengers;[90] 4 covered spring vans … &c.'.[91] Initially, they did not fully abandon the main road, as, shortly afterwards, they advertised an eight-passenger service, using the *Wasp*, (presumably the 'phaeton'); but this venture ceased at the beginning of 1838.[92]

With three mail-carts and the phaeton, Brodie & Cutts had operated a carrier service supplemented by a limited passenger enterprise. Without the buffer of the mail contract, the Coxes' integrated passenger transport and accommodation services had successfully competed on the road, enabled Cox to regain the mail contract, and ultimately caused Brodie & Cutts to withdraw. Brodie & Cutts were sound operators, but not innovators, and showed that possession of the mail contract was not, of itself, sufficient to grow the business. The Cox enterprise had attracted the existing passenger market through better service, and in the case of the coordinated sea passage from George Town, had also expanded the market.

However, just as the business seemed established, the personal, physical strain of its development took its toll. The *Launceston Advertiser* announced 'the death of Mr. JOHN EDWARD COX, of the Cornwall Hotel ... Mr. Cox had long been

---

[88] Ibid., 12 November 1836, p. 3.
[89] Ibid., 12 August 1837, p. 2.
[90] A phaeton was usually a four-passenger vehicle. I have been unable to find any example, which could carry nine passengers.
[91] *Launceston Advertiser*, 13 July 1837, p. 2.
[92] *Colonial Times*, 19 September 1837, p. 8 and 16 January 1838, p. 2.

suffering from a pulmonic complaint, induced, we have heard, by his unremitting personal exertions in the conduct of his stage-coach and mail undertakings.'[93]

If Cox's commitment to driving and personal supervision on the road, in all weather and road conditions, had caused his ill-health, the time spent must also have meant he was not generally available to manage the finance, horsing, logistics and hospitality side of the business. His time and debilitating effort in the enterprise was directed towards the organising-producing-inspecting-maintaining functions of the business.[94] However, some aspects of the enterprise were clearly innovatory, and required promotion and development, as well as sound, even brave, financial risk and management. Although, since leaving the *Macquarie Hotel* Mary Ann Cox's public persona had retreated, she had remained an active partner within the family business.

Mary Ann Cox

James Belich believed that women in booming settler societies, as a partner in a family enterprise could double the value of their work while providing for their longer term security against illness or widowhood.[95] This realistic judgment goes some way towards explaining the roles undertaken by men and women in colonial VDL. The division of labour within working families was naturally accepted and remarkably efficient; broadly, men did things, usually outdoors, and women ran things, and did indoor work. This approach has persisted in rural Tasmania.

Well-functioning family businesses have employed teamwork as a way towards success right up to the present.[96] For the historian however, it is not easy to identify the contribution of the wife within the team, unless as in Prinsep's case, it is through the observation of a diarist. Had it not been for the early death of her husband, Mary Ann Cox's capabilities might not have become evident.

---

[93] *Launceston Advertiser*, 26 October 1837, p. 3.
[94] Charles Margerison and Dick McCann, *Team Management Systems, an overview* (Toowong, Qld., 1990), p. 3.
[95] James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: the Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-world, 1783-1939* (New York, 2009), p. 549.
[96] eg. Westfield 'seeks hard-working team players who can fit into a family-led autocracy' in Graham Hubbard, Delyth Samuel, Simon Heap and Graeme Cocks, *The First XI: Winning Organisations in Australia* (Milton, Qld., 2002), p. 217.

Before 1870, a married woman was not an individual legal entity.[97] Catherine Bishop, citing Blackstone's *Commentaries*, noted that the legal being of a woman was suspended or incorporated into that of her husband during marriage, but that 'spinsters and widows had the same legal rights as men during the nineteenth century'.[98] These descriptions therefore explain Mary Ann Cox's circumstances as an historiographically invisible partner in the family business until the death of her husband.

Cox had made a will during the week before he departed for England in 1830 and appointed his wife as executrix and Joseph Tice Gellibrand as executor.[99] Gellibrand had been VDL's Attorney-General but had lost that post after disputes with Lieutenant-Governor Arthur. Although allegations against him were ultimately disproved, he did not regain his position. He was principled, but not politically accommodating, and at the time of the will's drafting he was a barrister. However, at the time of Cox's death, Gellibrand was missing in the Port Phillip hinterland, never to be found.[100] Two points are relevant for the Coxes' circumstance: they were able to call upon a man of some standing in the colony as executor, and they chose a man of principle, even though he was out of favour with the government establishment.

Probate directed the first priority from Cox's estate was to settle the deceased's debts, before the remainder passed to his wife (the will included conditional arrangements should she remarry, and for the couple's children).[101] Accordingly, the estate was placed in the hands of trustees, one of whom was Alexander Fraser, the Hobart coach builder, who was the Coxes' maintenance provider in Hobart (*post* Chapter 7); the others being John C. Stracey, of Hobart Town, and Thomas Williams of Launceston.[102]

Stracey was a Hobart Town auctioneer, and presumably well-known to the Coxes through the auctioneering networks.[103] At the beginning of 1837, Thomas

---

[97] G.C. Cheshire and C.H.S. Fifoot, *The Law of Contract* (London, 1964), p. 371.
[98] Bishop, *Minding her own Business: Colonial Businesswomen in Sydney*, p. 28.
[99] John Edward Cox, *Probate of, and Last Will and Testament*, AD960/1/1, p. 247 No 132 (Hobart, 1837).
[100] P.C. James, 'Gellibrand, Joseph Tice (1792–1837)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne, 1966).
[101] Cox, *Probate of, and Last Will and Testament*.
[102] *Launceston Advertiser*, 7 December 1837, p. 1.
[103] *Colonial Times*, 21 February 1837, p. 2 and 11 April 1837, p. 2.

Williams was a time-expired director of the Tamar Banking Company, and a partner in the firm of 'Messrs. Williams, Campbell and Co., merchants', in which capacity he often acted as assignee of insolvent, and other estates.[104] Presumably as recent settlers in the north, the Coxes' networks were not as well-developed as those in the south, but with Williams' background in banking and commerce, they were nevertheless soundly served.

The trustees announced they would manage the business in the interests of the creditors and the Cox family, until the encumbrances were removed. Administratively, they split their responsibilities between north and south, the dividing line being 'on the Hobart Town side of Ross' (ie close to the twin colonies' 42nd parallel).[105]

Shortly before her husband's death, Mary Ann had given birth to their eleventh (but eighth surviving) child. Nevertheless, and notwithstanding the actions of the trustees, 'MARY ANN COX, EXECUTRIX' took action, within days, to manage the estate as the sole remaining executor.[106] Undoubtedly, she knew better than any the details of the business; it was her vital interest to ensure the continued success of the Cox enterprise and, signalling her authority, the convict workers were reassigned in her name. Thus, the trustees would have had carriage of the debt repayment, but Mary Ann carefully controlled the coaching and hospitality business.

By 1840 Mary Ann had repaid her husband's creditors in full. Since Cox's earlier insolvency had been discharged, the main elements of the Trust-Deed debt must have been incurred against the purchase of the *York and Albany Inn*, the lease of the *Cornwall Hotel*, and placing the second coach on the main road, during the period without the mail contract.

> Mr. Thomas Archer, of Woolmers … joined willingly in the Trust-Deed; and when the prudence and perseverance of Mrs. Cox, so earnestly applied to support her large family, had so far succeeded as to enable her to fulfil the terms of the Trust, she waited a short time ago upon Mr. Archer, with a checque [*sic*] for the amount, somewhat

---

[104] *Launceston Advertiser*, 5 January 1837, p. 4 and 16 February 1837, p. 4.
[105] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 8 December 1837, p. 1.
[106] THE ESTATE OF THE LATE MR. JOHN EDWARD COX. NOTICE in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 4 November 1837, p. 3.

> about £80; This good and benevolent man … returned it to the widow as a present![107]

If £80 was the final amount, the whole debt was probably considerable and its discharge in less than three years was principled and disciplined. Undoubtedly, Mrs Cox earned, enjoyed and would retain the confidence and respect of the northern establishment.

Nevertheless, quitting the business, at least partially, was always an option. Initially, she advertised the remainder of the lease on the *Cornwall Hotel*, which would continue to be the Launceston terminus of the coach and mail services, and was therefore a lucrative, going concern, with sub-lets. However, she was unable to find a suitable applicant. On several occasions during the 1840s, she sought to dispose of the mail and coach establishment to investors, and 'especially those residing on the line of road', viz the inn-keepers and horse providers, again without success.[108]

The island was sinking into depression, which reached its low point in 1843 and from which it did not begin to emerge until 1845. Charles Swanston of the Derwent Bank considered 'all kinds of property … are unsaleable unless at ruinous prices' and feared a condition of general bankruptcy.[109] In such circumstances, Mrs Cox's management of the business was a commendable achievement, but when no sale resulted from her disposal proposal, she became more involved in the enterprise.

Her business considerations were manifold. Throughout, there was the question of the mail contract. Shortly, competition sprang up on the main road. There were always accidents on the road, which seemed to increase towards the end of the decade. The mail contract conferred some exemptions from bridge tolls and puntage, but these commercial advantages were progressively removed and replaced by coach license fees and road tolls, for which there were no exemptions and which increased operating costs. The depressed island economy kept revenue down, while fluctuating seasons drove up the cost of fodder and bedding straw. Of course, these were overheads faced by all operators, but they heightened competition in a stagnant market.

---

[107] BENEVOLENCE, in *Colonial Times*, 17 November 1840, p. 7.
[108] *Launceston Advertiser*, 7 December 1837, p. 4 and 4 February 1841, p. 4.
[109] Swanston to Montague, 17 February 1843, in R.M. Hartwell, *The economic development of Van Diemen's Land : 1820-1850* (Carlton, Vic., 1954), pp. 226-7.

Further difficulties arose from a spate of highway robberies. On the morning of 3 July 1843, three armed men stopped Mrs Cox's coach in Epping Forest. According to testimony, only the coach driver, James Hewitt, was robbed (of £7 in notes, and a watch). Hewitt halted the coach as he thought the men would shoot one of the horses (which would have brought down the other horses and caused the coach to crash). Mrs Cox was on board her (unguarded) coach and, at the subsequent trial, identified Lawrence Kavenagh, of the Martin Cash gang, as one of the highwaymen.[110] Cash later claimed credit for the holdup, which, in an example of the increasingly sophisticated travel industry, he had planned with the use of an almanac to determine the time of arrival of the coach.[111] Soon afterwards, the gang held up the mail-cart on Spring Hill, but by early 1844, all of Cash's gang had been apprehended.[112] However, that was not the end of the robberies.

By night, two armed men robbed the mail-cart 'again' near Antill Ponds, by placing a three-foot high barricade across the road.[113] The *Launceston Advertiser* called on the government to accept Mrs Cox's offer to send the mail by well-guarded coach; and, considering a reliable 'public post' a business necessity, *The Courier* bemoaned the irrecoverable loss of correspondence, remittances, documents, deeds and property titles caused by the robberies, supported the proposal for armed guards, and called upon the Lieutenant-Governor (Eardley-Wilmot) to act.[114] Clearly, Mrs Cox displayed private enterprise initiative in the midst of bureaucratic inertia.

Stefan Petrow calculated that by 1843 seven gangs were active in the north alone, and considered bushranging had 'reached an especially dangerous level'. [115] He described the efforts of the convict constables as risible, and believed there was a 'more numerous, desperate and dangerous breed of convicts' than in the past. However, Cash's holdup of a stage-coach was a very rare occurrence.

---

[110] TRIAL OF LAWRENCE KAVENAGH. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, in *The Courier*, 15 September 1843, pp. 2-3.
[111] Martin Cash, *Martin Cash : the bushranger of Van Diemen's Land in 1843. A personal narrative of his exploits in the bush and his experiences at Port Arthur and Norfolk Island* (Hobart Town, 1870), p. 124.
[112] *The Courier*, 22 March 1844, p. 3.
[113] *Launceston Advertiser*, 2 May 1844, p. 2.
[114] *The Courier*, 3 May 1844, p. 2.
[115] Stefan Petrow, 'After Arthur: Policing in Van Diemen's Land 1837-46', in *Policing the lucky country*, ed. Mike Enders and Benoît Dupont (Annandale, N.S.W., 2001), p. 188.

Mail-carts on the other hand, especially on remote tracks, were targeted; but Cash admitted their purpose in the Spring Hill holdup had been primarily to mislead the authorities about their whereabouts. Bushrangers primarily preyed upon settlers in their properties; and the frequency of highway robberies in England, and in gold-rush rich NSW and Victoria, was never matched in VDL or Tasmania. Unlike raids on remote properties, a highway robbery on the well-trafficked main road, especially in daylight, was very risky and required a quick getaway.

Nevertheless, Mrs Cox became actively engaged in negotiating contract changes. Her existing contract (at £995 pa) had been to carry the mail by one-horse mail-cart,[116] but the PMG accepted her offer to run thrice-weekly, daytime mail-coaches in each direction, with an armed guard, for an annual sum of £1400, paid monthly until the expiration of her current contract.[117] The GPO sought tenders for the supply of weapons for the guards,[118] who were Post Office employees, but no new mail contract tender was requested before the announcement that the service would commence.[119]

The new arrangements, however, still did not satisfy northern business interests. The *Launceston Examiner* observed that a London merchant could receive a reply from a Dublin correspondent in under forty hours, whereas eighty-seven hours were required in Launceston to receive a reply from Hobart Town. 'Observer' bemoaned the loss of the night mail, and noting 'that no attack was ever made upon the mail when an armed guard accompanied it' called for a government arrangement with Mrs Cox to run a guarded, overnight mail.[120] The northern business network was exerting pressure, and Mrs Cox was proposed as the means to a solution.

Therefore, during the following year (1845), and again without a request for tender, a night mail was re-established. Mrs Cox announced her 'light two-horse

---

[116] General Post Office, 'A Return of all contracts for the conveyance of mails in the Colony of Van Diemen's Land during the year 1845', in *POST 44/4*, British Post Office Archive (Hobart Town, Van Diemen's Land, 1845).
[117] Letter, F.C. Smith (PMG), Mrs Mary Ann Cox, GPO, 17 May 1844, in Tasmanian Archives and Heritage Office, Colonial Secretary's Office, CSO8, 171, C2522, pp. 156-58.
[118] GPO, PMG (F.C. Smith), 1 March 1844, *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 8 March 1844, p. 285.
[119] GPO, PMG (F.C. Smith), 22 May 1844, ibid., 31 May 1844, p. 589.
[120] POST OFFICE, in *Launceston Examiner*, 9 October 1844, p. 3 and 21 December 1844, p. 4.

Night Coach, To carry the Mail, and 4 inside Passengers' would run twice-weekly in each direction with a fare of £2.[121] No luggage was allowed, but would be forwarded by the day coach; this was in part due to the weight and space restrictions imposed by the carriage of the armed guards. A third stage-coach was the minimum requirement to conduct the day and night schedules, although of course an alternative would have been for a separate contractor to conduct the night operation.

The closed negotiations between Mrs Cox and the government aroused comment, but given the demand for the safe and timely delivery of the mail, and the English experience, the approach was understandable. A capital investment was required of Mrs Cox to deliver the extra services, and she needed some time to recoup her outlay. Also, although government was liable to audit, under the *Postage Act (1834)* it was not required to call for tenders. Government's responsibility was to provide value for money and an unbroken service, and there was no other reliable carrier who might quickly take up the contract. The decision not to retender was therefore reasonable, but did not satisfy the press.

Thus, when a price war broke out, so too did a media campaign, in which the newspapers were less than impartial. The opening shots had been fired from the south in a *Colonial Times* article, ostensibly supporting competition, but which also drew attention to Mrs Cox's commercial advantage, as the holder of the mail contract.[122] The newspaper excessively mentioned Mrs Cox's status as a widow, and its tone leaves the reader with a strong impression of the newspaper's insincerity, but allowed the newspaper a position of plausible deniability.

Mrs Cox's agent and regular representative, R.S. Nicholls, responded to the *Colonial Times* to offer a countervailing view of some facts, and of perceived advantage. He also explained that the mail-coach did not travel on Sundays 'in consequence of the conscientious regard of the proprietress to the due observance of the Sabbath'. The editor responded (obsequiously?) that 'We like fair play, and therefore, with pleasure, insert Mrs. Cox's letter, whose exertion since the death of her husband is beyond all praise'.[123]

---

[121] ROYAL MAIL COACH, in *Colonial Times*, 15 July 1845, p. 1.
[122] Ibid., 1 October 1844, p. 3.
[123] Letter, R.S. Nicholls, in ibid., 21 December 1844, p. 3.

Paralleling the Coxes' choice of Gellibrand as executor, Mrs Cox applied a principled, Christian business ethic, and never ran coaches on a Sunday, instead leaving that commercial opportunity to her competitors. Catherine Bishop also noted the importance of '"proper" middle-class female behaviour' and the need to be judged 'respectable' by licensing authorities.[124] Mrs Cox held licences for her inn and for her stage-coaches and held government contracts. Reputation and respect were essential ingredients of a colonial entrepreneur's ways and means towards success, but a single woman's reputation was potentially more fragile than those of her male counterparts.

Perhaps from a fuller understanding of the true cost of business, Mrs Cox sometimes matched, but never undercut her opposition's fares, although price wars did cause her to reassess her involvement in the enterprise. In 1846 she offered for sale, the whole of her coaching establishment:

> consisting of the Good-will of the Business, eight Coaches of the best construction, upwards of one hundred valuable Horses, a full complement of Four-horse and Double Harness, and including the MAIL CONTRACT, which has twenty-one months to run from the 1st of January next.[125]

But again, no successful buyers came forward. However, the advertisement shows the extent to which she had grown the coaching enterprise and vehicle mix, from her husband's mail-cart or passenger coach service, through carts and coaches, to stage-coaches and guarded mail coaches, and including the acquisition of her own horses and stud. No price was mentioned.

By the beginning of 1848, Mrs Cox's *Royal Mail* day coach ran six times a week in each direction, and the night coach four, and, subject to the outcome of the retendering of the mail, she was reported to be considering an extra day coach.[126] However, her tender was undercut. Nevertheless, she continued to run coaches by day and night, using the *Cornwall Hotel* and the *Ship Inn*, as the new mail contractor, Samuel Page, developed his service.[127] A kind of competitive complementarity was achieved on the road; nevertheless, Mrs Cox chose again to attempt to dispose of her

---

[124] Bishop, *Minding her own Business: Colonial Businesswomen in Sydney*, p. 104.
[125] TO BE DISPOSED OF BY PRIVATE CONTRACT, THE Whole of THE MAIL COACH ESTABLISHMENT, in *Colonial Times*, 25 December 1846, p. 4.
[126] COACHES, in *Launceston Examiner*, 26 February 1848, p. 1 and 26 August 1848, p. 5.
[127] Ibid., 14 October 1848, p. 1 and 28 October 1848, p. 2.

business, including 150 horses but, as before, no immediate sale resulted, and Mrs Cox maintained the business as an operating venture, acquiring a new coach, from Crocker of Launceston later that year.[128]

Unsurprisingly, concurrent running heightened competition on and off the road. Within the first week 'both coaches performed the fastest trips that have been made upon the road', the *Mail* taking 11½ hours and Mrs Cox's 11¾ hours.[129] Of course, this result reflected the opening of the Bridgewater Bridge, but the Salt Pan Plains road was still not complete. Mrs Cox also introduced a new, Saturday, day coach, which immediately recorded a southbound time of 11 hours. The event must have been anticipated, because spectators turned out along the road 'to witness the flying teams pass through their neighborhood'; however, with a clear implication of racing, it also raised concerns about accidents. [130]

Accidents there had been aplenty, and these were given as the main reason for Mrs Cox's final attempt to dispose of her coaching business, especially following the distressing crash on the Cocked Hat hill, when the guard's leg was amputated but he died nevertheless:

> When first seen he was lying under the coach, which had passed over his legs. He lay very patiently while the necessary steps were taken to remove the coach; his legs were frightfully mangled, and in that state he was carried into Launceston. Among the persons injured was a little girl; the poor fellow, who displayed uncommon patience, requested the doctors to attend to her first.[131]

The Editor of the *Colonial Times* commented 'Mrs. Cox … is nearly heart-broken from so many misfortunes having occurred of late, notwithstanding that she has done every thing in her power to avoid them.'[132]

While Mrs Cox's networks were very largely 'always free', her workforce had to be drawn from the larger population. Out of a total population of 70,164 in 1847, 34.4% were serving convicts.[133] However, from the remainder the mix of 'always

---

[128] TO BE DISPOSED OF, MRS. COX'S ESTABLISHMENT ON THE ROAD, St. John-street, Launceston, April 10, in ibid., 11 April 1849, p. 6 and 11 July 1849, p. 6.
[129] The Road, in *The Courier*, 7 November 1849, p. 2.
[130] COACHING, in *Launceston Examiner*, 14 November 1849, p. 9.
[131] THE COACH ACCIDENT, in *The Courier*, 14 April 1849, p. 2.
[132] SERIOUS COACH ACCIDENT, in *Colonial Times*, 10 April 1849, p. 3.
[133] Table 4.2 Census of Free Population and Convicts, in Terry Newman, *Becoming Tasmania : renaming Van Diemen's Land* (Hobart, 2005), p. 118.

free' and former convicts could not be determined, as officials were not allowed to ask about people's 'condition in life'.[134] Nevertheless, if one assumed a (low estimate) third of the non-convicts were ex-convicts, and discounted the military and their families, that would place the 'always free' at less than 40% of the island's total.

James Hewitt, Mrs Cox's driver (coachman, coachee, whip, jehu) at the time of the Cash holdup, was one such former convict: a groom, who had been transported for horse stealing and assigned to John Batman during the Black Line campaign.[135] He was an occasional licensee, but was best known for his driving: 'There is no man in the island better knows how to handle a pair of horses than you' opined the Police Magistrate while sentencing him after his guilty plea on yet another (usually alcohol fuelled) furious driving charge.[136]

Other Hewitt incidents included a confrontation during overtaking with Benjamin Hyrons during which he threatened to 'knock him [Hyrons] off the box';[137] and, in a case described as 'a jolly party of the "coach and cad gentry"', Hewitt was accused of whipping the face of a rider, who was overtaking.[138] (R.S. Nicholls, attended the court as Mrs Cox's observer.)

Drivers were key employees in VDL stage-coach enterprises and most were former convicts, a category which initially placed them almost inevitably into the lower class and furthered their hostility towards authority. Russel Ward also considered a nomadic way of life was a convict trait, but the VDL stage-coach drivers were locationally if not temperamentally relatively settled.[139] James Belich's proposal of three, booming settler-society, socio-economic sectors, viz crews, farmers and townsfolk, wherein surplus males comprised the crews, within a liquor-consuming male among males subculture might better explain the behaviour of the coachmen.[140]

---

[134] Ibid., p. 116.
[135] Founders and Survivors, 'James Hewitt', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31190251.
[136] LAUNCESTON POLICE OFFICE. Furious Driving, in *The Courier*, 20 April 1854, p. 3.
[137] OPPOSITION COACHES, in *Launceston Examiner*, 22 January 1845, p. 4.
[138] LOCAL. The Knights of the Whip, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 21 October 1846, p. 811.
[139] Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend* (Melbourne, 1966), pp. 38-39.
[140] Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: the Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-world, 1783-1939*, pp. 548-49.

Perhaps, when booms turned to bust, even the nomads preferred locational stability, but within the crew culture.

Coach drivers enjoyed considerable notoriety in the island, but often developed egos, which outstripped their sense of responsibility; the *Cornwall Chronicle* considered it was 'time for these gentry to be taught a lesson'.[141] 'Gentry' recalls E.P. Thompson's point, that there was a pre-industrial, pre trades union 'labour aristocracy' founded in the skilled artisan. This 'old elite … considered themselves as good as masters, shopkeepers or professional men' (an attitude which certainly applied to the *jehus*).[142] Or was their behaviour an example of one of Richard White's developing Australian characteristics: 'A very decided disinclination to recognise the authority of parents and supervisors'? [143] Alternatively, in the melting pot of free and convict, old world and colonial Tasmanian society, was a particular 'Vandemonian' characteristic emerging?[144]

Thus, many emotional, financial, business, legal and supervisory stress factors affected Mrs Cox as she tried to sell the enterprise. Also, her close business associate, Alexander Fraser had been overseas and perhaps she was feeling the loss of his support; but at the pinnacle of coaching development in VDL, Samuel Page bought Mrs Cox's entire coaching establishment for £3000, immediately prompting a concern from the newspapers about the likely capacity, frequency and cost implications of a monopoly on the road.[145]

The sale figure recalls Swanston's earlier 'ruinous prices' assessment, but value and cost were probably different matters. The price of a good coach horse was about £35, meaning Page's £3000 did not even amount to the cost of the 150 horses. Therefore, coaches, at approximately £175 each, 24 sets of harness, facilities and connections on the road, and the goodwill of the business came free. However, at least in the case of the horses, for which she had her own stud, the apparent market value would not have reflected her cost of acquisition, and the other equipment might be

---

[141] FURIOUS DRIVING, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 18 November 1846, p. 891.
[142] E.P. Thompson, *The making of the English working class* (Ringwood, Vic., 1968), p. 262.
[143] Richard White, *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity 1688-1980*, The Australian Experience (Sydney, 1981), p. 77.
[144] Alex C Castles, 'The Vandemonian Spirit and the Law', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, Vol. 38 (1991), p. 106.
[145] *Launceston Examiner*, 8 December 1849, p. 6.

regarded as a sunk cost, for which their time in service had repaid the outlay. Nevertheless, Page obtained a bargain.

At that time the general economic situation in the island was improving. Hartwell noted the increasing prosperity during the period 1845 to 1849,[146] and quoted an address by Lieutenant-Governor Denison to the Legislative Council in 1849 declaring that 'the period of [economic] distress has now to all appearance passed away'.[147] Therefore Mrs Cox's motives for the sale must have been complex. The coaching business environment had changed. Exemptions from government charges had been removed, and licence fees and tolls had been imposed, increasing the overheads. (*The Courier* reported Mrs. Cox's fees for crossing one ferry and passing one toll-bar at £501 16s. per annum.)[148] Competition was developing, and the accidents would have increased the costs for repairs, rescue and on-forwarding, and maintenance.

Alexander Fraser was increasingly diversifying and would shortly depart for Victoria;[149] so Mrs Cox's established business relationships were fragmenting, and Fraser's departure was indicative of the exodus from VDL to Victoria, which was to shrink the market and might have been another factor in her decision to sell cheaply. Other personal considerations were pertinent. She had raised a family and conducted the coaching business for twelve years since the death of her husband; she was probably fatigued. Shortly, she purchased commissions in the Indian army for three of her sons, so perhaps the sale helped finance those purchases.[150]

Conclusion

The Cox enterprise was a free settler, non-sojourner, family business, requiring dedication and teamwork, but while Mrs Cox epitomised her roles, she was not unique. Mail contract rival, Mrs Cutts, whose convict husband was her assigned servant, was another example of women in the industry, as was Mahala Mills, whose

---

[146] Hartwell, *The economic development of Van Diemen's Land : 1820-1850*, p. 232.
[147] Legislative Council 31 July 1849, in HTG 7 August 1849, in ibid., p. 234.
[148] *The Courier*, 1 November 1848, p. 3.
[149] Renate Howe, 'Fraser, Alexander (1802–1888)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne, 1972).
[150] Stancombe, 'Cox, John Edward (1791-1837)'.

free settler, coach-driving husband also died at the age of 46 leaving the business to a wife who developed it further; and there were long-established English precedents.[151]

A determination to drive the coaches was a common trait of the male entrepreneurs, and while there was a need to understand operations, such (in two cases fatal) attitudes suggest adventurism, and avoidance of the mundane. Alternatively, since the business reputation depended upon safe and timely delivery, perhaps the owner-operators were unwilling to delegate to (former convict) employees whom they did not fully trust.

The Coxes built and maintained effective networks with family, business, horsing, banking and finance, legal, and government (especially the PMG) contacts, which enabled them to weather insolvency, recession, and competition on the road. Their broad acceptability, straddling the colony's government and non-official society, enabled them to call upon that network support. In one sense, they were members of the merchant class, but they were also settler colonisers. Like others, they relocated to Launceston, which they presumably considered better suited to their enterprise needs. Thus, regionality developed in the colony, and was not merely an imported social structural concept.

Respect, reputation and class were also very significant factors in Mary Ann Cox's success. In the press, she was always 'Mrs Cox'; her correspondence with the press was always through her agent, as was any attendance at public legal proceedings; in all official documentation she was 'M.A. Cox';[152] and her network argued her case in the press. That is, she knew how to maintain the right degree of distance; yet she was pro-active with the bureaucracy, and personally involved and adept in renegotiating contracts to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes; and throughout, she maintained a principled, Christian business ethic (albeit leveraged by a feminine, widowed status), which thwarted the press's attempts to paint her as a monopolist, friend of government.

For the government, the management of publicity around the mail contract was a 'no win' dilemma. The press expected speed and reliability at minimum cost, opposed any hint of monopoly and wanted full visibility of the process, yet of course

---

[151] A. Everitt, *Perspectives in English Urban History* (London, 1973), pp. 124-26.
[152] eg Audit Office, in *Launceston Advertiser*, 25 January 1844, p. 5.

they were not the ones responsible or accountable for delivering the outcomes. The PMG's negotiations with the prime contractor, Mrs Cox, were perfectly legal, minimised risk and probably achieved good value for money in that market; but public pressure to discontinue the arrangement was irresistible on the part of government. Mrs Cox knew the true cost of maintaining a viable business; but if acceptance of the lowest mail tender were to become government policy, then it would be possible for any unproven, start-up venture to undercut the tenders, win the contract, and even expect the government, in its own vital interest, to come to the rescue in the event of partial performance or even default.

In delivering and integrating transport services, the Coxes used a family business structure to effect a very significant contribution to the social, economic and communications development of the colony. Mary Ann Cox expanded their ventures into a large business enterprise, with a determination and energy, which exemplified what Zoë Laidlaw described as 'the distinctive dynamism of Anglophone settler colonization'.[153]

Within Jonathan Hughes' five categories of entrepreneur, the Coxes might best be described as organisers.[154] They marshalled their resources, raised capital by means of trusts, and grew the business steadily in the face of economic uncertainty, thereby providing stability to their associates. In an 'ends, ways and means' sense, their strength was in the organisational 'ways'; but also their personal ends were financially modest and tempered by a Christian ethic. The Coxes did not migrate to VDL merely to get rich; they came to settle, grow, and make a contribution to and within their new community. Nevertheless, they were part of a historiographically, relatively unrecognised and undervalued, stratum of society.

[153] Zoë Laidlaw, 'Breaking Britannia's Bounds? Law, Settlers, and Space in Britain's Imperial Historiography', *The Historical Journal* 55, no. 3 (2012), p. 829.
[154] Hughes, *The Vital Few: American Economic Progress and its Protagonists*, p. 4.

PART 2 – ENTERPRISES ON THE MAIN LINE OF ROAD

CHAPTER 5

OPPOSITION ENTERPRISES

Were the Coxes members of what Jonathan Hughes styled 'the vital few'? Hughes, quoted Lenin's teacher G.V. Plekhanov:

> Change never takes place 'by itself'; it always needs the intervention of *men*, who are thus confronted with great social problems. And it is those men who do more than others to facilitate the solution of these problems who are called great men.[1]

Setting aside Plekhanov's use of 'men' as generic for humankind, at the outset the Coxes had little competition; but they nevertheless had the skills to effect change in the face of considerable financial and environmental risk (amidst what was arguably an original social engineering experiment) with little practical support and in the absence of established infrastructure. In that sense, they were among the very vital few and Mary Ann Cox was the preponderant partner; but having pioneered the main road services, the Coxes were soon followed by others who sought to emulate their success, and compete for the trade.

Given the Coxes' example, would the competitors be drawn from a similar social background and use the same family business structure? The colonial economy improved somewhat during the 1840s and the government progressed steadily with its program of public works, especially regarding roads and bridges. However, government increasingly regulated the transport industry and adopted a user pays approach. Furthermore, government contracts for carriage of the inland mail became more exacting. How would the established and novice stage-coach entrepreneurs manage in the face of such changes?

Government's desired ends and priorities began increasingly to diverge from those of private enterprise, and the cooperative approach achieved between Mrs Cox and the colonial bureaucracy gave way to an atmosphere of competition. Over time, a

---

[1] Jonathan Hughes, *The Vital Few: American Economic Progress and its Protagonists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 14.

level of incompetence, compounded by officious personalities, made the situation worse. Therefore, this chapter will look at how the transport entrepreneurs who entered the main road route managed their circumstances in order to determine the extent to which Mrs Cox was one of the 'vital few'.

Initially, no scheduled operators came forward to compete with Mrs Cox and the trustees on the entirety of the main road, but there was some opportune traffic. For example, Benjamin Hyrons advertised his close Britscha one Friday from Bush's *Tasmanian Inn* in Hobart Town to Launceston, which probably involved the initial delivery of that coach. In March 1839, Hyrons had commenced the first land conveyance for passengers from Launceston to George Town using a two-horse van; the Britscha might have been intended to improve the capacity and quality of that service.[2]

On the main road, Stancombe said Hyrons had 'put his "Comet" coach on the run in 1840' and that consequently, fares dropped to £3.[3] The claim referenced an advertisement by Hyrons for his 'YOUNG QUEEN STAGE COACH', which was to depart from the *London Wine Vaults* one morning for Launceston.[4] The advertisement also announced the coach would run to New Town on race days. No schedule for a service on the main road was mentioned and there was no indication of any return journey from Launceston, or any subsequent advertisement. Hyrons likely acquired the *Young Queen* for use in the north, and sought commercial opportunities around its collection from Hobart Town, before delivering it to Launceston, during which journey he minimised costs by offering space-available fares. By 1840, Hyrons had already established his coach service to George Town; and, recalling associated inn and coach naming, in 1842 *The Young Queen* was also the name of an inn there.

The Cox enterprise, with its mail contract, therefore had a *de facto* monopoly on the main line of road until 1844, which would explain Mrs Cox's strength in renegotiating contracts with the PMG. Competition on the road did, however, develop over time. This chapter's title 'opposition enterprises' broadly describes how primacy on the road and possession of the mail contract fluctuated between competing

---

[2] *Colonial Times*, 5 March 1839, p. 7 and 16 June 1840, p. 3.
[3] George Hawley Stancombe, *Highway in Van Diemen's Land* (Glendessary, Western Junction, Tas., 1968), p. 40. (note 71, p. 251, Colonial Times, 17 March 1840)
[4] *Colonial Times*, 17 March 1840, p. 1.

ventures especially during the 1840s. Except for one brief moment, no two comparable enterprises achieved a simultaneous state of viability; it always became a win/lose competition.

Although Appendix A records the very large number and high turnover rate of participants in every level of ventures in the branch lines, on segments of the main road and between the two main centres through to the 20th century, it does not situate them within the broader business environment. Therefore, this chapter will examine the competition on the main road, with its exchanges of the mail contract, as an example of the overall complexity, which confronted stage-coach entrepreneurs.

Benjamin Hyrons and the *Comet*

The Cox enterprise was a free settler, family business with associates, and characterised by stability, and the opposition enterprise, initiated by convicted forger, Benjamin Hyrons (*ante* Chapter 3), attempted to mirror that pattern, but from a position of relative disadvantage.[5] While Hyrons' complicated personal life involving three wives across colonial jurisdictions is a reminder of the social compromises made in the island's transition from penal colony towards self government, his property deals, and progressive ventures as shopkeeper, licensee and theatre venue provider, demonstrated his ability to deal with complexity and his imaginative, diversified, but linked, approach to business.[6] From this background, Hyrons, who was usually popular (but less so with the authorities), entered business upon the main line of road.

In January 1844, Hyrons announced his *Dispatch* had commenced running once per week in each direction,[7] and he placed the *Comet*, which was 'built by Mr. Johnson, of Collins-street [Hobart], and upon a construction suited to the rough and often perilous roads of the colony', on the route in mid-1844. With this coach, the proprietor, 'single-handed and alone', commenced a thrice-weekly, next-day return, daytime service, including a Sunday departure which, given 'the present

[5] Founders and Survivors, 'Benjamin Hines [Hyrons]', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31180097.
[6] G. Squires, 'Benjamin Hyrons: Shoemaker, convict, storekeeper, innkeeper and stage coach proprietor', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, Vol. 24 (1977), pp. 67-69.
[7] NEW CONVEYANCE, 'THE DISPATCH', in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 3 February 1844, p. 3.

unsatisfactory state of our "postal arrangements"', was most appreciated.[8] Hyrons employed one driver for the whole route and seems to have used the *Comet* exclusively for the schedule.

Travellers should have been the beneficiaries of this competition, which was expected to keep the fares down. Hyrons introduced shorter stages and a more comfortable service 'especially for females' in order to improve his competitiveness,[9] and purchased a '*New Comet*' to double capacity.[10] However, begging consideration for the outlay that he had incurred, he raised his fares to match those of Mrs Cox.

The Courier was concerned that two opposition stage-coaches, running simultaneously, would naturally lead to racing and a reduction in safety. The *Comet's* time of departure should be delayed to better accommodate the needs of travellers, as no business could be conducted at the destination after the time of arrival, even with a 4:00 am start. Regularity, (ie scheduled times at destinations on the road) was a better objective. Monopoly should not be sought, the *Comet* could not compete against the mail contract, and all concerned would be better served if the *Comet* ran on the days not served by the mail coach.[11]

However, this appeal for harmonious co-existence went unheeded and, very quickly, Hyrons had to rethink his enterprise. In 1845, he announced he had:

> withdrawn his coaches from the road for the present. It is now contemplated to form a joint speculation, some residents at Hobart Town having offered to run a coach to the half-way house, if Mr. Hyrons will do the same from Launceston: the two concerns to be separate and independent.[12]

Hence the proposed revised business construct was for syndicates north and south, which would coordinate. The dividing line, north of Oatlands and south of Ross, once again reflected the old 42nd parallel, modified slightly to cater for the bad road across the Salt Pan Plains.

The likely reasons behind Hyrons' decision were multi-faceted. Competition with the *Mail* coach (and sector operators on the main road) probably placed him

---

[8] THE " COMET " COACH, in *Colonial Times*, 13 August 1844, p. 3.
[9] Ibid., 1 October 1844, p. 3.
[10] THE "COMET" and "NEW COMET," in *The Courier*, 29 October 1844, p. 1.
[11] CHEAP TRAVELLING, in ibid., 18 January 1845, p. 2.
[12] The "COMET" COACHES, in *Launceston Examiner*, 23 July 1845, p. 4.

under financial stress (the *Colonial Times* later stated he had made 'a great loss'.[13] His need for subordinate service providers (he had stepped up to the large business enterprise category and outside his northern and urban networks) may have caused him to consider an alternative business arrangement. Perhaps, he received an unsolicited offer; or, the scale of operations on the length of the route required a greater capital investment than he could manage alone.

Additionally, Hyrons offered his *Tasmanian Inn* for sale, along with 'thirty or forty excellent coach horses', citing his intention to depart for England on particular business.[14] Within a week, the inn had sold for over £600, and his intention to depart disappeared equally swiftly, as the *Launceston Examiner* reported he was contemplating restarting when the fine weather returned, and that two more coaches were building for the main road.[15] Perhaps he had intended throughout to use the sale to raise capital for investment into the *Comet,* and his stated intention to leave the island was a ruse to instil some urgency into the sale at the bottom of the recession.

Soon, *The Courier* welcomed the reappearance of the 'meteor of the road … with a brighter tail than ever',[16] and 'B. Hyrons and Company' announced the commencement of operations.[17] The company involved new business networks and coordinated travel services. Hyrons' *Angel Inn* was the Launceston departure point, and the *City Hotel* was the Hobart Town agency. Northbound passengers from Richmond and the Broad Marsh district could join the coach at John Davis's *Castle Inn*, Pontville.[18]

B. Hyrons & Co's southern associates included William Martin, who was running Hyrons' initial main road coach, the *Dispatch*, in a coordinated service between the *Bridge Inn* Richmond and his *City Hotel*, the terminus of the *Comet*;[19] and from an open letter regarding a dispute over some 'turkies', it would seem John

[13] THE "COMET COACH", in *Colonial Times*, 7 November 1845, p. 3.
[14] *Launceston Examiner*, 2 August 1845, p. 5.
[15] SALE OF PROPERTY, in ibid., 9 August 1845, p. 4.
[16] COMET COACH COMPANY, in *The Courier*, 12 November 1845, p. 2.
[17] COMET. COMET, in *Colonial Times*, 18 November 1845, p. 1.
[18] COMET COACH COMPANY, in *The Courier*, 12 November 1845, p. 2.
[19] THE "DESPATCH", in ibid., 29 October 1844, p. 1.

Davis was also the proprietor of the *Regulator*, a coach from Green Ponds to Bridgewater which coordinated with the steam ferry.[20]

Alison Alexander was confident John Davis was an ex-convict in Pontville, where 'most businesses were run by ex-convicts'.[21] If so, he was likely a Londoner who had been employed as a gentleman's servant and groom before being transported in 1825 for stealing 20 quarts of wine.[22] William Martin's background is less certain. If he were not always free, he might have been an expiree, sentenced to seven years in 1821 for 'stealing silk holders from the back of a coach'.[23]

However, in another example of the rapid turnover in business relationships, 'Mr. Hedditch's, London Wine Vaults' soon replaced Martin's booking agency.[24] Elijah Hedditch was the father of Hyrons' third wife, Mahala,[25] so a family dimension was introduced into the range of business networks; but this arrangement was also short-lived and the *Derwent Hotel* (Frederick Saville)[26] became the new point of departure from Hobart Town. Perhaps the family connection did not prove satisfactory from a business sense, or had been used as a strictly interim measure.

Eventually, Hyrons heeded the calls to avoid simultaneous running, and as 1846 drew to a close 'the proprietors' (unspecified) brought the *Comet's* departure time forward, so as to avoid the dangerous practice of racing,[27] and Hyrons pressurised his opposition by reducing his fares.[28] He also added the *Enfield Hotel*, (Edward Greenbank)[29] to his booking offices in Launceston. Greenbank was likely

---

[20] Letter, Unparalleled Act of Oppression!, H. S. Benjamin. Macquarie Hotel, Hobart Town, in *Colonial Times*, 22 June 1841, p. 1.
[21] Alison Alexander, *Tasmania's convicts : how felons built a free society* (Crows Nest, NSW, 2010), p. 57.
[22] Founders and Survivors, 'John Davis', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31090378.
[23] Founders and Survivors, 'William Martin', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31290511.
[24] NOTICE, COMET DAY COACH, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 18 July 1846, p. 547.
[25] Squires, 'Benjamin Hyrons: Shoemaker, convict, storekeeper, innkeeper and stage coach proprietor', p. 68.
[26] IRO, 30 September 1845, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 7 October 1845, p. 1254.
[27] HOBART TOWN & LAUNCESTON COMET COACH, in *Colonial Times*, 27 October 1846, p. 1.
[28] COMET-COMET-COMET ALTERATION OF TIME AND REDUCTION OF FARES!!! in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 28 November 1846, p. 926.
[29] IRO, 2 October 1847, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 5 October 1847, p. 992.

sentenced in York for passing forged notes, and his wife and children joined him later as free settlers. Passing forged currency was an interest he shared with Benjamin Hyrons, but as a soft criminal, Greenbank had been assigned to constabulary duties.[30] 'Felon police' formed 66% of the constabulary at the time, but were widely suspected of corruption and abuse of power.[31]

The *Comet* alliance continued to expand, and a new *Comet* coach was built in Hobart Town 'for Mr Greenbank's'.[32] Greenbank had been licensee of the midway changeover point, the *Half-way House,*[33] and had kept a double relay of horses at nearby Blackman's River to ensure the schedule of the *Comet* in adverse conditions.[34] Within Hyrons & Co, he was therefore a coach owner and horse provider for the middle and northern stages, and a key member with his midland contacts.

Despite the *Launceston Examiner's* hope that a new service by the steamer *Cornubia* from Launceston to Port Phillip would benefit the coaches, the market remained depressed.[35] In May 1847, 'one of the Partners' in the 'Comet Coach Company' sought to retire from the business, and by the end of the year, the *Comet* had ceased running.[36]

Hyrons had attempted to follow Mrs Cox's model with associates on the road, but his former-convict network struggled. His attempt to establish a large enterprise consortium for the length of the main road, again using a former-convict network failed, as did his subsequent attempt to coordinate the efforts of respective north and south former-convict syndicates. Such arrangements were very complicated, and in many cases would have been formalised only by verbal agreement: legally binding, but consequent upon the burden of proof (including for researchers). The necessary financial accounting for such consortia would have challenged the capabilities of any

---

[30] Founders and Survivors, 'Edward Greenbank', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31160180.
[31] Stefan Petrow, 'After Arthur: Policing in Van Diemen's Land 1837-46', in *Policing the lucky country*, ed. Mike Enders and Benoît Dupont (Annandale, NSW, 2001), p. 176.
[32] NEW COACH, in *Launceston Examiner*, 9 January 1847, p. 4.
[33] IRO, 3 October 1843, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 6 October 1843, p. 1095.
[34] Letter to the Editor, Mail Contract, 'FAIRPLAY', in *Launceston Examiner*, 25 August 1847, p. 5.
[35] THE "CORNUBIA." in ibid., 12 June 1847, p. 4.
[36] COMET COACH COMPANY ELIGIBLE INVESTMENT, in *Colonial Times*, 25 May 1847, p. 1 and 12 November 1847, p. 3.

clearing-house, but was probably effected informally. Therefore it was not surprising that there was a high turnover rate of participants, many of whom soon became insolvent and had to be quickly replaced within a consortium.

That Mrs Cox succeeded where the *Comet* consortium faltered might be due to a number of factors. The Cox enterprise was a family business with supporting suppliers; the *Comet* enterprise drew its associates into a consortium of consortia, ie a different contractual relationship with a different financial structure. Within the *Comet* enterprise there seemed to be no equivalent of the trust-deed for raising capital, which probably also suggests a lesser level of investor support; and while Hyrons was popular with the people and the press, that backing did not amount to any financial support. Throughout, there was the question of whether the population was yet sufficient to support two competing enterprises. Mrs Cox's was a free settler enterprise; that of Hyrons was drawn from among the former convicts: would this prove to be a factor? Finally, the *Comet* did not enjoy the limited benefit of the mail contract, with its associated and attractive prestige. The *Comet* model proved less effective from an organisational (ways) and a financial (means) perspective.

Messrs Page, Farrant & Greenbank

When expressions of interest had been sought (May 1847), the Comet Company's property had been said to consist of 'about eighty horses … and four coaches', and financial details could be obtained from 'Mr. Saville, Hobart Town; Mr. John Davis, Brighton; or, Mr. Greenbanks, Launceston'.[37] There was no mention of Benjamin Hyrons, who was probably the partner wishing to leave. When the *Comet* ceased running (or as its cause), John Davis put his 'one-half share' of the company up for sale, at auction in two locations. Twenty-four coach horses, 'having ran on different Stations between Oatlands and Launceston' were offered at Samuel Page's sale yards in Oatlands; and twenty horses, which had run on the southern sector, along with the '"COMET" COACH, having hitherto ran between Hobart Town and the Half-way House' were offered in Hobart.[38]

---

[37] COMET COACH COMPANY ELIGIBLE INVESTMENT, in ibid., 25 May 1847, p. 1.
[38] ONE HALF OF THE COMET COACH COMPANY'S ESTABLISHMENT FOR SALE, in ibid., 9 November 1847, p. 2.

Therefore, within the Company, Hyrons had owned two coaches, and Greenbank and Davis one each. Davis was the preponderant horse provider, contributing in both the north and south divisions. By implication, Davis's *Comet* coach ran only between Hobart and the *Half-way House*, meaning one of the northern-owned vehicles must have shared the southern duty. Although this interpretation accords with the business agreement to divide the route at the *Half-way House*, changing coaches in mid journey (involving the double-handling exchange of luggage and parcels) seems inefficient, and there is no obvious reason why coaches should not have run the full length of the road.

Davis's northern assets were to be sold at Samuel Page's sale yards in Oatlands. Page, the subject of the next chapter, had partially bought out carrier and mail contractor, William Cutts, thereby acquiring the land for the sale yards and the site for his *Oatlands Hotel*, and by 1847 had spent ten years as a licensee observing coaching enterprises on the main road. Unsurprisingly therefore, Page was the first piece of the reassembly of the opposition enterprise. He announced a *Comet* service between his *Oatlands Hotel* and Frederick Saville's *Derwent Hotel,* the earlier *Comet's* booking office and departure point.[39] Saville had been one of three points of contact for the Comet Company sale. Presumably Page had been a successful bidder at the Davis auction, and he wasted no time in replacing Davis in the enterprise.

John Davis is the only option for the 'Mr Davis' mentioned by Stancombe as a partner of Mrs Cox in her operation of a *Comet* coach,[40] and the citations all fall within Davis's time of membership of the *Comet* consortium.[41] There is nothing to show Mrs Cox was ever involved in running a *Comet* (her rival), although it is possible Davis provided her with some horses. Indeed, some years later, Davis's inn was simultaneously providing horsing services to both operators on the main road and to two branch enterprises.[42]

In 1848, 'Messrs. Page, Farrant, & Greenbank' announced the resumption of the *Comet* service, with coordinated transfers for Westbury and Deloraine, at the same

[39] OATLANDS COACH, in ibid., 25 January 1848, p. 1.
[40] Stancombe, *Highway in Van Diemen's Land*, p. 41.
[41] Note 76, in ibid., p. 251.
[42] *The Hobarton Mercury*, 9 May 1856, p. 3.

fares as for the *Mail*.[43] William John Farrant was licensee of the *Rainbow Inn* in Campbell Town, from which he was seeking to sell out; but, like so many others during the recession and exodus, in this he had been unsuccessful.[44] He soon announced that he had purchased a coach to run on the main road. Presumably, as it was not described as new, this was one of Hyrons' coaches. Thus, Farrant was a coach owner within Page, Farrant, & Greenbank, and before the new consortium commenced operations, Farrant and Greenbank were separately running their coaches on scheduled services between Launceston and Campbell Town.[45]

However, on start-up, the rejigged *Comet* enterprise suffered an immediate setback. 'Mrs. Farrant … sustained severe injuries' in an accident to the *Comet* on its first run, while being driven by Greenbank, who suffered a dislocated shoulder blade when the vehicle was overturned.[46] Following, and perhaps on account of, this accident, the new consortium's advertised service was delayed till further notice, although Page's Oatlands *Comet* continued running.[47]

In the following week, the sale was announced, at Farrant's *Rainbow Hotel*, of 'twenty-six very superior HORSES, purchased expressly for the intended re starting of the "Comet" coach'.[48] One week before the sale, Farrant had announced his intention to run the *Comet* 'starting from Mrs. Kitson's, Launceston Hotel',[49] ie not from Greenbank's *Enfield Hotel*. Next, he advertised a connecting service via Oatlands with Page's service to Hobart Town. The *Launceston Hotel* was the northern terminus, and Farrant recommended the services and facilities of the *Rainbow Hotel*, and Page's *Oatlands Hotel*.[50]

Due to what Greenbank described as 'the parties not being able to come to arrangements', the Page, Farrant & Greenbank enterprise had stalled on start-up.[51]

---

[43] "COMET" COACHES, in *Colonial Times*, 18 February 1848, p. 2.
[44] Letter, To the Editor, Campbell Town, 29th Sept. Homo, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 3 October 1846, p. 762, 4 November 1846, p. 853 and 2 October 1847, p. 4.
[45] NEW COACH TO CAMPBELL TOWN, WILLIAM FARRANT and TRAVELLING in ibid., 11 March 1848, p. 3.
[46] COACH ACCIDENT, in *Launceston Examiner*, 12 February 1848, p. 6.
[47] "COMET" COACHES, in *Colonial Times*, 29 February 1848, p. 1.
[48] *Launceston Examiner*, 4 March 1848, p. 6.
[49] THE COMET - Campbell Town Races, in ibid., 11 March 1848, p. 7.
[50] LAUNCESTON TO OATLANDS - W. FARRANT, in ibid., 1 April 1848, p. 7.
[51] 'COMET,' COACH, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 1 April 1848, p. 1.

Greenbank, independently, announced a rival *Comet* service between his *Enfield Hotel* and 'the Assembly Rooms Hotel Campbell Town', ie not to Farrant's *Rainbow Hotel*.[52] Therefore, Greenbank was no longer a member of the consortium, but Farrant and Page were still cooperating. The failure to come to arrangements might have been because the latter were aware of Greenbank's impending insolvency, and shortly, eleven of his horses were put up for sale.[53]

Greenbank owed one creditor over £500, and there were allegations of his improper behaviour after being declared insolvent.[54] His books could not be produced as they had been packed in a box, which had been sold, along with other items, which had 'been either sold or clandestinely removed'.[55] After an initial refusal,[56] Greenbank's license for the *Enfield Hotel* was transferred to John Hartridge,[57] who became another weak, short duration element in the *Comet* enterprise.

Worse was to follow, and the consortium suffered another setback with the insolvency of William Farrant[58] in the middle of the route. Among Farrant's creditors was C. Stewart (the Launceston coachmaker?).[59] Nevertheless, that month, the enterprise, by then effectively only Samuel Page, was expected to recommence a *Comet* between Hobart Town and Launceston.[60]

Benjamin Hyrons had not completely quit the scene. That year, he was licensee of the *Comet Hotel* in the Longford district, the name implying a lingering *Comet* coach connection;[61] and also, the *Launceston Examiner* reported he was an unsuccessful tenderer for the mail contract, in competition with Samuel Page.[62] To

---

[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid., 10 May 1848, p. 1 and 13 May 1848, p. 3.
[54] INSOLVENT COURT, May 31, in *Launceston Examiner*, 3 June 1848, p. 6.
[55] INSOLVENT COURT. Wednesday, 17th May. In re Edward Greenbank, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 20 May 1848, p. 2.
[56] MEETING FOR TRANSFER OF VICTUALLERS' LISENSES, in ibid., 9 August 1848, p. 2.
[57] ADJOURNED MEETING FOR TRANSFERS, &c, in ibid., 26 August 1848, p. 2.
[58] IN the matter of the Insolvency of William John Farrant, in ibid., 23 August 1848, p. 3.
[59] INSOLVENT COURT. WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30. In re W. J. Farrant, in ibid., 2 September 1848, p2.
[60] *Launceston Examiner*, 26 August 1848, p5.
[61] IRO, 30 September 1848, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 3 October 1848, p932.
[62] MAIL CONTRACT (Launceston Examiner), in *Colonial Times*, 1 September 1848, p. 3.

tender, Hyrons presumably had coaching assets, and to do so against Page confirmed that Hyrons was no longer a participant in the consortium on the main road. Instead, Hyrons was operating *The Original Comet* between Longford (*Longford Hotel*) and Launceston (his own *Angel Inn*) via Perth.[63] The name of the coach suggests this was one of Hyrons' original two *Comet* coaches, but that the name '*Comet*' was somehow proprietary and reserved for the main line of road.

Within the Page, Farrant & Greenbank consortium, only Greenbank was a former convict. The attempt (deliberate or otherwise) to adapt Hyrons' failed, former-convict, consortium model by populating it with free settlers did not succeed, implying business complexity rather than a convict/free background was responsible for the failure. In theory, seeking business synergies through combination and coordination was a sound strategy to grow everyone's business; but theirs was an inverse strategy, in which association was expected to negate the weaknesses of the component parts, but without any mechanism for cross-subsidy of the loss making elements. Those elements were undercapitalised and poorly managed in a recessive economy, and could not be saved by associations. In short, synergies arise from combining strengths, not weaknesses and the model again failed through inferior ways (organisation/structure) and means (principally finance).

The Cox model involved largely single ownership of the means: ie plant, horses and real estate; and had the buffer of a government contract of some value and duration. Association with such an enterprise gave certainty to service providers, as was demonstrated by the longevity of licensees at Cox-associated inns on the road (eg William Thornell at the *Bald Face Stag*, and Thomas Nicholls at Cox's own *York and Albany*).[64] By contrast, the consortium approach, as applied, had an almost unmanageable number of small parts under separate ownership, with different contractual relationships and without the ability to cross-subsidise loss-making units without recourse to external financing. It was just too complicated for inexpert, undercapitalised managers.

---

[63] LONGFORD AND LAUNCESTON!!! "THE ORIGINAL COMET" BENJAMIN HYRONS, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 5 January 1848, p. 1.

[64] Both licensees found in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 11 October 1839, p. 1137, and 3 October 1848, p. 932.

Different interpretations of the business terminology might explain discrepancies in the historiography, such as Stancombe's 'partnership' between Mrs Cox and Mr Davis. Some enterprises did combine into a formal company, eg B. Hyrons & Co. Others, such as Page, Farrant & Greenbank used a business name, but were only associated. A proprietor owned the business, ie the enterprise on the road and its goodwill, but not necessarily all of the assets used by the enterprise. The licensee of an inn might have been, but usually was not, the owner. In a non-business sense, horse providers partnered with the business proprietors, but this was really a hierarchical, contractual relationship; the same could be said of other service providers, such as vehicle maintainers and fodder suppliers, and throughout, the use of verbal agreements for these arrangements further blurred the distinctions. There were therefore a number of 'ways' in which an enterprise might be structured, and they were not standardised. Unfortunately, the experience of business failure was the path towards identifying the optimum organisational structure.

The mail contract tendering process

The management of the mail contract tendering process and the difficulties and perceptions surrounding it, dogged the government. Referring to 'that jobbing contract', one correspondent, 'FAIRPLAY', asserted that Hyrons had tendered unsuccessfully at less than half the amount subsequently awarded to Mrs Cox, without any explanation from government.[65] 'Jobbing'[66] was an inference readily levelled by correspondents using *noms de plume,* although the editor remarked that as the correspondent had given his name, he 'had no title to reject his communication'.[67] Nevertheless, unless the editor checked, there was no guarantee of the correspondent's authenticity, nor were readers privy to the author's identity or motives.

---

[65] MAIL CONTRACT. Letter to the editor from 'FAIRPLAY', in *Launceston Examiner*, 25 August 1847, p. 5.
[66] 'to deal with as a middleman', 'to turn a public office or service … improperly to private or party advantage', in H.W. Fowler, William Little and Jessie Coulson, *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on historical principles*, ed. C.T. Onions (Oxford, 1973), vol 1, p. 1134. eg Edmund Burke 'the jobbing of public funds'.
[67] *Launceston Examiner*, 25 August 1847, p. 3.

Presumably the PMG was sensitive to such criticisms, as when Mrs Cox lost the contract, 'Mr. Page, Mr. Hyrons, and Mr. Monks' were also tenderers,[68] and the contract was awarded to Page at £700 pa.[69] As Mrs Cox had held the previous contract at £1400 pa, and the new contractor would henceforth be subject to the Bridgewater bridge toll for which even the pro-government, anti *Launceston Examiner* 'Observer Bridgewater' acknowledged would amount to an annual rate of £507 12s 4d, Page had placed himself under considerable commercial stress.[70]

With his purchase of Mrs Cox's establishment, Page bought a monopoly on the length of the road, but other operators served some sectors. Mrs Mills was one such, but Page applied commercial pressure to prevent her from staging her horses at the *Royal Oak* in Green Ponds, one of his staging points. Mrs Mills did not consider Page's conduct 'very liberal or considerate towards her as a widow', and believed the public, in noting his behaviour, would be 'much more liberal than he appears to have been in this instance'.[71] Until this point, competition had focused on price-cutting or capacity increases, and there was some sense of a stage-coach business community; but Page, through commercial leverage, introduced anti-competitive practices by attempting to monopolise the enabling services. He may have done this because he knew he was about to lose his coaching monopoly as Benjamin Hyrons re-entered the road.[72]

However, even before that, Page was struggling to balance his stage-coach enterprise's finances. He ceased to offer credit, centralised all payments for the coaching establishment upon his coach office in Oatlands, and announced he would not be responsible for debts incurred by any of his employees.[73] He charged his bookkeeper, 'Henry Parrington, a free man' with embezzling £1 6s; but in his defence, Parrington claimed Page owed him £16 15s in unpaid wages.[74] In a further effort to control the road, 'An Old Subscriber' reported Page had bought up all the straw for miles around Oatlands, and intended to withdraw his horses from any inn

---

[68] *Colonial Times*, 1 September 1848, p. 3.
[69] *The Courier*, 2 September 1848, p. 2.
[70] TOLLS. Letter, 'An Observer Bridgewater', in *Launceston Examiner*, 8 November 1848, p. 5.
[71] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 4 September 1850, p. 589.
[72] Ibid., 12 October 1850, p. 687.
[73] *Colonial Times*, 9 July 1850, p. 2.
[74] EMBEZZLEMENT, in ibid., 26 July 1850, p. 2.

serving the opposition: a policy which Mrs Cox had counselled against.[75] In considering the private 'ends' of the entrepreneurs, Mrs Cox's attitude displayed a philanthropic, social development aim, whereas Page seemed more concerned with personal wealth creation, or perhaps simply business survival.

The *Cornwall Chronicle* reported that fares had been 15s, but when Hyrons re-entered the road Page reduced them to 5s, and offered 'a bed, a cup of coffee, a nobler of old Tom … free of expense!'.[76] On such terms the 'Old Subscriber' was prepared to contract for a year![77] Finally, 'some evil disposed person or persons' destroyed Hyrons' coach advertisement in Hobart Town.[78] A new level of anti-competitive behaviour had been introduced.

Public support, north and south, rallied behind Hyrons in his efforts 'against an unjust monopoly'.[79] The inhabitants of both main towns raised subscriptions and each gave Hyrons a stage-coach; in this instance, goodwill did translate to commercial (means) advantage. Local sentiment favoured the opposition and the *Cornwall Chronicle* was quite prepared to lecture Samuel Page.[80] Competition maintained the low fares and consequently load factors were good, but even so revenue was insufficient to sustain Hyrons.[81] With his customary 'leaving the colony' ruse, Hyrons announced the sale of his entire '"Diligence" Coaching Establishment', including three coaches (presumably including the two recently gifted to him).[82] The *Cornwall Chronicle* believed there was sufficient traffic to support two coaching establishments (but made no mention of seasonal variations) and urged the formation of a public coaching company to avoid 'the abuses consequent upon monopoly'.[83]

Hyrons' feint was again successful and shortly the newspaper reported he had completed arrangements for keeping his service on the road, including with inn-

---

[75] FREE TRADE, A HUMBUG; OR, PROTECTION NOT MONOPOLY. Letter, 'An Old Subscriber', in ibid., 1 October 1850, p. 2.
[76] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 31 October 1850, p. 754.
[77] *Colonial Times*, 1 October 1850, p. 2.
[78] FIVE POUNDS REWARD. F. SAVILLE, Derwent Hotel, in ibid., 15 October 1850, p. 4.
[79] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 15 October 1850, p. 296.
[80] The Cornwall Chronicle, reported in *Colonial Times*, 21 February 1851, p. 2.
[81] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 31 December 1850, p. 960.
[82] DILIGENCE COACHES! in ibid., 15 March 1851, p. 166.
[83] Ibid., 15 March 1851, p. 164.

keepers for staging along the route.[84] He then announced that 'four gentlemen' had taken an interest in the route, which would enable him to acquire forty more horses, and he called upon his creditors to present their accounts so that he could settle his debts.[85] Like Page, he moved to a non-credit basis. The new arrangements were less than the *Chronicle's* proposed coaching company, but the enterprise enjoyed the backing of 'four most influential colonists'.[86]

When Page's mail contract renewal became due, the PMG requested tenders for a fifteen-hour journey, with a 20s penalty for the first ten minutes late, and 5s per five minutes late thereafter. There were no exemptions from any tolls, and the contractor was 'to give up the back of the Mail Coach exclusively for the Post Office Guard'.[87] Tenderers were to provide the names of two responsible persons as sureties, a bond was to be provided, and the contractor would not receive any remuneration until the bond had been duly prepared and executed.

The successful tenderer, Benjamin Hyrons, commenced his service in October 1851,[88] but by January 1852 was declared insolvent, only to have his insolvency 'superseded' within a month.[89] Someone had saved him, but it was the end of his involvement on the main road and he returned to branch line ventures. What then of the 'Diligence Coaches' enterprise and the mail contract?

One of the 'four gentlemen' who had taken an interest in the enterprise was James Lord, a midlands horse-breeder and landowner, who along with Peter Hughes, a Hobart property dealer,[90] had taken out stage-coach licences for the main road.[91] Another of the four might have been Edward Lapham, who received a licence for the route coincident with Hyrons' departure, but about whom little can be said except that he was not a former convict.[92] The fourth gentleman was likely James Lord's brother

---

[84] Ibid., 9 April 1851, p. 220.
[85] 'Diligence' Coaches, in ibid., 10 May 1851, p. 293.
[86] DILIGENCE COACHES, in *Colonial Times*, 13 May 1851, p. 3.
[87] GENERAL POST OFFICE, 1 July 1851, PUBLIC NOTICE in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 1 July 1851, pp. 514-15.
[88] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 1 October 1851, p. 624.
[89] In the Matter of the Insolvency of Benjamin Hyrons, of Launceston, in Van Diemen's Land— Licensed Victualler, in ibid., 17 January 1852, p. 37 and 14 February 1852, p. 104.
[90] *The Courier*, 19 November 1851, p. 3.
[91] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 19 November 1851, p. 738.
[92] Ibid., 11 February 1852, p. 92.

John, a horse-breeder and landowner in the southern sector of the route. However, practical difficulties arose.

Although Lieutenant-Governor Denison (who as a junior Royal Engineer officer had worked on the construction of the Canadian canals[93] and had been more determined than any of his predecessors, including Arthur, to prioritise communications infrastructure and improve the lines of communication) had directed effort on the main road to achieve its final completion by the end of 1849, the completed road was not immune from the excesses of the weather.[94] During the winter of 1852 floods turned the Salt Pan Plains into a fourteen-mile lake[95] and damaged the Perth Bridge so as to make it unusable.[96] This combination of circumstances, and an inattention to detail, was particularly embarrassing for Captain F.C. Smith, the PMG.

When Hyrons' enterprise failed, James Lord, who had been one of his sureties, took over the running of the coaches and carried the mail until the closure of the Perth Bridge, at which point he ceased supporting the contract. An official investigation into the circumstances surrounding the 1851 mail contract revealed that there had been 'some neglect … in getting the papers signed', the bond had not been finalised, and although Lord had carried the mail for some six months, he had done so without any binding contract.[97] In the Legislative Council, Mr T.D. Chapman, reckoning a consequent loss to government of £1800, noted that 'had the form of notice which appeared in the Gazette been complied with, no payments would have been made until the contract was properly signed', and sought the responsible officer.[98]

The Colonial Secretary acknowledged there had been 'an error in judgment by the Postmaster-General', but supported Captain Smith who was 'a deserving public officer … [who] had not been wilfully guilty of a dereliction of duty'. Furthermore,

---

[93] A.J. Smithers, *Honourable conquests : an account of the enduring work of the Royal Engineers throughout the empire* (London, 1991), pp. 30-68.
[94] Finance Minute for 1850, Lieutenant Governor, 9 August 1849, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 14 August 1849, p. 548.
[95] THE FLOODS AND THE LAUNCESTON MAIL, in *Colonial Times*, 16 July 1852, p. 3.
[96] DISASTROUS FLOODS. DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY AND LOSS OF LIFE. HOBART TOWN COACHES STOPPED, in ibid., 13 August 1852, p. 3.
[97] Legislative Council, TUESDAY, SEPT, 7, in ibid., 10 September 1852, p. 2.
[98] Ibid.

the investigation had taught Smith 'a severe lesson' and impressed upon him the need to be 'more strict'. Mr Chapman said that while this might explain the matter it did not excuse the officer, who had 'been guilty of a great neglect of duty, and not merely an error of judgment'.[99]

Smith avoided dismissal, but his lack of attention to administrative detail had earned him an official investigation, a serious censure in the Legislative Council, the newspaper publication of his shortcomings, and was a significant blow to his reputation. One would expect him therefore to be 'more strict' in his future supervision of government contracts. To emphasise the public scrutiny, 'Q in the Corner' summarised as follows: 'The Colonial Secretary was most anxious that Capt. Smith should not receive any further castigation at the hands of the Legislature, seeing that he had already been duly admonished by the Executive'.[100]

The Legislative Council also examined the PMG's actions subsequent to Lord's withdrawal. Without issuing a further request for tenders, Smith had awarded a three-year contract to Samuel Page at £1400 pa. The Colonial Secretary, again supporting his subordinate, pleaded the 'emergency' nature of the situation, but some Honourable Members considered that contracts should not be issued without tendering, and more particularly, that a one-year contract should have been let in this case, as others might have wished to tender.[101]

Smith's resultant zeal for more strictly examining and enforcing government contracts was no doubt a factor in the next mail contract dispute. Within a year, Samuel Page wrote to the Lieutenant-Governor raising a number of concerns and requesting a waiver of the fines imposed upon him by the PMG for the late arrival of the mails under contract.[102] The Auditor? (presumably advised by the PMG) noted that Page had systematically broken his contract by filling up the back of the coach in defiance of the PMG, and questioned why Page had not raised his fares if the route did not pay.[103] The Lieutenant-Governor noted some sympathy for Page but stressed

---

[99] Ibid.
[100] Letter to the Editor, THE MAIL CONTRACT, Q IN THE CORNER Sept. 13, 1852, in ibid., 21 September 1852, p. 3.
[101] Legislative Council, TUESDAY, SEPT, 7, in ibid., 10 September 1852, p. 2.
[102] Letter, Samuel Page to Lieutenant-Governor Denison, dated Oatlands 20 July 1853, in Colonial Secretary's Office, CSO 24/1/227/8710, (Hobart, 1853), ff. 230-39.
[103] Note, ??? [Auditor?] 22 July, in ibid., f. 240.

the importance of a contractor meeting his obligations.[104] Accordingly, the Colonial Secretary informed Page he was to suffer the penalties.[105]

Smith imposed further fines, which amounted to the loss for Page of one whole month's remuneration in accordance with the late arrival penalties in the contract (20s for the first ten minutes, then 5s per five minutes) prompting Page to write to the Colonial Secretary asking for an increase in remuneration for the contract and restitution of the penalties already paid.[106] The detail of the dispute will be addressed in Chapter 6, but the Lieutenant-Governor directed the assembly of a board[107] comprising the Treasurer, the Auditor and the Registrar of the Supreme Court to investigate the situation and make a report.[108]

The matters raised in the Board's report will also be examined in Chapter 6, but the result was that Samuel Page was not to have his fines remitted, but would be awarded a £40 per month bonus for full satisfaction of the contractual requirements. Government conceded that the whole of the back seat of the mail coach rather than the back of the coach was to be given to the exclusive use of the guard.[109]

Between the times of Hyrons' default on the contract and Page's partial performance, the Legislative Council considered drafts of a new Post Office Act. Given the recent experience, concern was expressed that the amount of the penalty for default on a contract was insufficient to deter a contractor from simply walking away. Nevertheless, when the new Act was passed the maximum penalty remained at £50, but applied to every party for any breach committed by any contracted party, regardless of the contractual conditions imposed with respect to the bond.[110] This could therefore be interpreted as meaning joint liability for each individual's

---

[104] Note, 'WD' 23 July 1853, in ibid.
[105] Letter, CSO (W.T.N. Champ) to Samuel Page, dated 2 July 1853, in ibid., ff. 245-47.
[106] Letter, Samuel Page to CSO, dated 25 August 1853, in ibid., ff. 249-52.
[107] Note, WD 16 Sept, in ibid., f. 252.
[108] Government Order, CSO, 20 September 1853, in ibid., ff. 253-54.
[109] Letter, CSO (W.T.N. Champ) to Samuel Page, dated 24 October 1853, in ibid., ff. 283-85.
[110] His Excellency Sir William Thomas Denison Knight Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the Advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act to regulate the Conveyance and Postage of Letters. [31st August, 1853]', in *17 Victoria No 6 (1853)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart, 1853), Section 39.

responsibility for every breach, which would have a cumulative, and therefore significant penalty. Nevertheless, any satisfactory outcome could only be achieved after due process and on conviction, and was subject to the PMG drafting and completing an effective contract. Presumably the Honourable Members had confidence that the PMG would henceforth be attentive to such matters.

These events showed a shift in attitude by the government towards the achievement of its ends. With the final completion of a good road between the two main towns, government expected a better guarantee of service and progressively refined its performance expectations, although its preferred way of delivering the service remained through contracting and at minimum cost. Some incompetence within the government bureaucracy was highlighted and an increasing level of local supervision at the political level placed further pressure on the accountability of officials. The colonial social and administrative structure was transitioning from a pioneering environment to one of relatively established settlement. Accountability and public scrutiny increasingly influenced government's priorities but moved the relationship between bureaucrats and contractors onto a more adversarial footing.

Lord & Co

Government and the PMG had not fully listened to Page's broader reasons for his predicament, and while James Lord had walked away from the mail contract without penalty, he had not ceased to run his stage-coaches in opposition to Page on the main road. Within months, negotiations were underway by which Page would transfer the whole of his coaching establishment to Lord for £6000.[111] Lord & Co also took over Page's mail contract and thus achieved a monopoly on the road.[112]

(It was at this point in the development of VDL stage-coaching that Cobb & Co was formed in Melbourne. They imported American Concord stage-coaches and introduced them onto the three-mile route from the bay to Melbourne in December 1853.)[113]

---

[111] *The Courier*, 5 January 1854, p. 2.
[112] COACHING NOTICE Day and Night Royal Mails, AND TALLY-HO AND HARKAWAY DAY COACHES. MESSRS. LORD AND CO., in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 22 February 1854, p. 6.
[113] Joan Rutherford, 'A History of Cobb & Co 1853-1955', (State Library of NSW - Mitchell Library, 1959?), Chapter 2, p. 9.

James Lord had incrementally entered the business, first as horse supplier, then as a guarantor for Benjamin Hyrons, before operating the enterprise by default. The motivations of Lord and Page seem to have been more than commercial. Lord's background did not fit the normal pattern, and timing was a factor. James Lord's pedigree is also indicative of societal attitudes through the colony's first century.

James Lord's obituary stated he was born in Yorkshire, 'the son of a well-to-do farmer' and that his father, David Lord, had migrated to Hobart with his family.[114] In fact, David Lord was born in Mytholmroyd, a Pennine village not readily associated with the 'well-to-do'. James was returned to England for his schooling, and after returning to VDL, took a cargo of cattle to Western Australia, which he turned to some profit, although suffering considerable privation. On return, he managed his father's 'up-country estates'.[115]

The obituary did not mention that James's grandfather, also James, was a convict who arrived in HMS *Calcutta* with Lieutenant-Governor David Collins, and that his grandfather had 'accumulated a large fortune by unremitting industry, skilful farming, and shrewd trading, partly in spirits with and without licence'.[116] David Lord inherited his father's property, was a director of the VDL Bank, and in 1827 was described by the land commissioners as the richest man in the island. James and his brother John inherited considerable wealth and property upon David Lord's death in 1847.

The obituary also stated that James Lord had commenced his coaching interests by supplying Mrs Cox with horses, and that after Page had bought out Mrs Cox, Lord had a large interest in the opposition company of which Benjamin Hyrons was the recognised owner.[117] However, almost thirty years after the supposed business partnership, someone in the Lord family still felt motivated to issue a denial, and the *Mercury* published a correction saying James Lord 'was never connected with Mr. Ben. Hyrons in the coaching business'.[118] Yet 'Q in the Corner' had insisted 'it was notorious throughout the colony … that Lord-nominally surety for Hyrons-was in

---

[114] Obituary. The Hon. James Lord, in *The Mercury*, 23 May 1881, p. 2.
[115] Ibid., 23 May 1881, p2.
[116] Susan Allen, 'Lord, David (1785–1847)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne, 1967).
[117] *The Mercury*, 23 May 1881, p. 2.
[118] THE LATE HON. JAMES LORD, in ibid., 28 May 1881, p. 2.

fact, the contractor',[119] and in writing to the Lieutenant-Governor, Samuel Page grouped 'Messrs Hyrons and Lord' as abandoning the contract'.[120]

This free settler son of a free settler son of a former convict was sufficiently wealthy not to need the very uncertain commercial benefits of a colonial stage-coach enterprise, and whatever the business relationship had been with the former convict Benjamin Hyrons, the Lord family sought to distance itself from the association. The obituary also implied a desire to gentrify the family's ancestry. If there was more behind the Page vs Lord competition on the road, comparative status was one possible element.

Lord was well connected with government and was on a social footing with the Lieutenant-Governor, for example, hosting him to a deer hunt in 1851.[121] During that year before Hyrons' default, Lord had also been asked to stand as Member for Campbell Town in the Elective Assembly, but was soon the target of a very vindictive media campaign and later that year, his 'unexpected' withdrawal was announced.[122] He had been tagged as a 'pollutionist', ie an advocate for transportation, and although he had issued a denial, his supporters were identified as such.[123] Semantics then entered the debate: Lord denied being an advocate but was believed to be a supporter of transportation; 'Censor' thought the distinction 'jesuitical' and 'only worthy of a "Stuart"' inferring Jacobite sympathies.[124]

Thus when the question of the Hyrons and Lord mail contract default was at issue, 'Q in the Corner' reminded readers that James Lord was:

> a zealous supporter of THE GOVERNMENT … a thoroughgoing pol__ (I beg the gentleman's pardon) transportationist … [and] that letting him off so long, without giving sureties as a mail-contractor, was only the result of a system under which the toadies of the

---

[119] Letter to the editor, Q in the Corner, op cit, in *Colonial Times*, 21 September 1852, p. 3.
[120] Letter, Samuel Page to Lieutenant-Governor Denison, dated Oatlands 20 July 1853, in Office, CSO 24/1/227/8710, f. 231.
[121] PROGRESS OF HIS EXCELLENCY Sir William Denison, in ibid., 19 July 1851, p. 451.
[122] Ibid., 22 February 1851, p. 116 and 15 October 1851, p. 659.
[123] Letter to the editor, THE WHOLE HOG, CAMPBELL TOWN, in *Launceston Examiner*, 1 March 1851, p. 5.
[124] Letter to the editor, CENSOR, CAMPBELL TOWN, in ibid., 8 March 1851, p. 5.

> government have … been rewarded for their support of our ultra-penal Executive.[125]

Insinuations of jobbery always found ready readers. Samuel Page gave his support during the election to R.Q. Kermode, James Lord's opponent in Campbell Town. From other letters, 'Q in the Corner' seemed to be an Oatlands correspondent, perhaps even Samuel Page; but then, conspiracy theories are as entertaining as accusations of jobbery, only more difficult to prove.

When the mail contract was next tendered in 1855, there were more difficulties for the PMG. Reporting that the cost of establishment of a mail enterprise exceeded the value of the contract, and that even with revenue from passengers and parcels the enterprise still incurred a loss of thousands of pounds, the *Cornwall Chronicle* was not surprised that no tenders had been received, and called for a reversion to a not-for-government-profit, public service using mail-carts.[126] However, three tenders were submitted.

Joseph Fisher, the southern branch stage-coach operator had the winning bid at £5500 pa, the other tenderers being a Mr Carpenter and James Lord. However, Fisher and Carpenter subsequently withdrew from the process, and the contract was awarded to James Lord who re-entered at £6000 for the first year and £5000 pa for the following two years;[127] but suspicions of jobbery were no longer confined to the government, and there were allegations of collusion between the tenderers in the process. Mr Sharland had heard 'that Mr Fisher retired from the contract in favor of Mr Lord, who was to give him £500 for doing so'; but after Mr Allison pointed out the loss sustained by James Lord in the previous contract, and suggested no-one else was likely to take up the contract, the Council approved Lord's contract. Two separate sources therefore inferred that the postal contract was a significant loss-making venture, and Allison's remarks implied some sense of public service, or non-commercial motivation, on the part of Lord.

Captain Smith, the sensitised PMG, felt it necessary to explain these circumstances to the Governor, H.E. Fox-Young, who nevertheless thought the tender

---

[125] Letter to the editor, Q in the Corner, op cit, in *Colonial Times*, 21 September 1852, p. 3.
[126] THE MAIL, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 25 July 1855, p. 4.
[127] Legislative Council. Friday August 24. MAIL CONTRACT, in *Colonial Times*, 25 August 1855, p. 3.

should be readvertised. Smith had already issued two requests, and Fisher could 'neither purchase the requisite number of horses suitable for the work, nor obtain the necessary accommodation for them on the line of road at any price'.[128] Fisher had tried to come to some arrangement with James Lord, but found it 'impossible to do anything with him'.[129] If Lord were to participate on the road, it would be as a monopoly, family business. He had adopted Samuel Page's vertical monopoly approach by controlling the enablers, and his sureties included his brother John.

Page did not tender. That was presumably because as part of his (1854) sale to Lord, Page had covenanted:

> that he would not directly or indirectly be engaged or interested in carrying on any stage coach on the road between Hobart Town and Launceston (within 10 years) or do any other act matter or thing which might be or tend to be for the benefit of any person who should be engaged in any Coaching or conveyance on that road.[130]

However, the 1858 mail contract was awarded to 'Mr. S. Page, junr' at £2900.[131] Thus the earlier practice, whereby convict stage-coach entrepreneurs on the branch lines reneged upon a legal agreement to sell the enterprise with a guarantee of no further interest or action on the road, was adopted by the free-settler, Samuel Page.

'Epsilon' estimated the cost of keeping the mail contract enterprise on the road at £6954 pa, considered the new contractor's price unsustainable, and was dubious about the *Courier's* expectations of better performance and lower cost to government. James Lord brought an action against Page for breach of covenant, seeking £2000 in damages, but the matter was settled out of court when Page bought out Lord's enterprise for £8750, resulting in another monopoly on the main road.[132] Page, presumably no longer requiring the semblance of business separation provided by his son, dissolved the partnership at the expiry of the contract.[133] For a year, Lord 'now,

---

[128] Letter, F.C. Smith to H.E.F. Young, Governor, General Post Office, 20th August, 1855, in *Launceston Examiner*, 30 August 1855, p. 3.
[129] Letter, JOSEPH FISHER to F.C. Smith, Esq, Postmaster-general, Hobarton, 15th August, 1855, in ibid.
[130] SUPREME COURT. SITTINGS IN BANCO.-THIRD TERM, 1859. WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23. LORD (James) v. PAGE (Samuel), in *The Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 24 November 1859, p. 2.
[131] Ibid., 8 May 1858, p. 2.
[132] Ibid., 15 December 1859, p. 3.
[133] Letter to the editor, 'Epsilon', in ibid., 9 June 1858, p. 3, 24 November 1859, p. 2 and 15 December 1859, p. 3.

in Parliamentary language, the "Opposition"', had continued to operate but terminated all involvement after the sale to Page.[134]

If the mail contract was a loss-making venture, and essential, additional revenue from passengers and parcels might still not make up the shortfall, why did entrepreneurs enter upon the business? Individual personalities must form part of the answer as to why private entrepreneurs desired different ends.

James Lord was a horse breeder, racer, importer and exporter. Of all the stage-coach entrepreneurs, he had the highest social status, but like many of them, he also enjoyed driving coaches. 'That Prince of Charioteers, James Lord' escorted the Governor's party in a visit to the goldfields,[135] he was an 'Oddfellow',[136] a philanthropist,[137] and as a leader and manager, more attuned to the morale of his workforce than were his competitors.[138] Of course, some might describe his behaviour as paternalistic or patronising, but it was equally an example of a Georgian landowner's sense of social responsibility. His hostile press insisted he was 'only known for his sporting spirit and transportationist views',[139] but it should not be surprising that a colonist in his position should suffer the 'mendacity … characteristic of the convict press'.[140] Character was an ingredient of business practices on the road, and Lord was one of the few to exit solvent, and at a time of his own choosing.

James Lord's background and behaviour seems to fit Russel Ward's description of a native born child sent to the colleges of England exemplifying the colonists' 'ludicrous straining after exclusiveness and gentility'.[141] On the other hand, in rural areas with tenant farmers, and often linked with a horse breeding, horse racing fraternity, 'a political ethos of conservative paternalism' developed, where 'the nature of economic relationships was a powerful encouragement to patriarchy'.[142] Lord's background should not prejudice attitudes towards his ways, which like those of his

---

[134] THE NEW MAIL CONTRACT, in ibid., 2 September 1858, p. 3.
[135] THE GOVERNOR'S VISIT TO FINGAL, in *The Courier*, 8 February 1856, p. 2.
[136] ODD FELLOWSHIP, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 1 October 1853, p. 4.
[137] eg see FINGAL, in *The Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 1 June 1859, p. 2.
[138] INTERESTING REUNION, in ibid., 30 August 1858, p. 3.
[139] CANDIDATES, in *Launceston Examiner*, 10 September 1851, p. 4.
[140] "OUR PEOPLE" AT DINNER, in ibid., 24 December 1852, p. 6.
[141] Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend* (Melbourne, 1966), p. 39.
[142] Richard Waterhouse, *Private Pleasures, Public Leisure: A History of Australian Popular Culture since 1788* (Melbourne, 1995), pp. 19-20.

earlier associate on the road, Mrs Cox, exhibited altruism and a sense of community service. It was becoming apparent that stage-coach operations were largely loss-making ventures and some entrepreneurs sought ends beyond pure profit.

William Brown – an offshore option

The paucity of potential tenderers was a problem for the PMG, but an opportunity for new entrants. As early as 1857 there were reports that 'the high rates of fares now here, and our magnificent line of road' were encouraging an American Company from Melbourne to set up an enterprise 'on the go-a-head Yankee principle'.[143] Frederick M. Innes had replaced Captain Smith as PMG, and the 1858 request reminded tenderers of the acceptability of a two-horse mail-cart, but the *status quo* model maintained until the next iteration.[144] Organisationally, the position of PMG was combined with that of Colonial Treasurer,[145] and Innes sought to expand the pool of tenderers, not entirely to the satisfaction of the *Cornwall Chronicle*.

During the lead-up to the 1861 tendering process, Innes visited Melbourne several times with, or so thought the *Chronicle*, the intention of negotiating with Cobb & Co the uptake of the mail contract on the main road. Although the newspaper thought Innes's trips unjustified against the colonial budget, it did believe the involvement of Cobb & Co would 'wake up' the sleepy capitalists of Tasmania.[146]

However, the contract was awarded to William Brown of Geelong. Suggesting the contract was 'handed over to an unknown individual in the private parlour of some Melbourne or Geelong Hotel', the *Chronicle* questioned whether bribery or nepotism were involved in this unsatisfactory and unbusinesslike process, suggested the outcome was a 'foregone conclusion' which had wasted the time of the other tenderers, and would discourage further interest from the mainland and damage the credibility of Tasmania.[147] Of course, the newspaper emphasised that it did 'not

---

[143] New Coaching Establishment, in *The Hobarton Mercury*, 16 January 1857, p. 3.
[144] Public Notice General Post Office, 2nd February, 1858. CONVEYANCE of MAILS BETWEEN HOBART TOWN AND LAUNCESTON, in *The Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 17 March 1858, p. 3.
[145] V.B. Adnum, *A History of the Post Office in Tasmania* (Hobart, 1975), p. 67.
[146] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 13 April 1861, p. 4.
[147] THE MAIL CONTRACT, in ibid., 20 April 1861, p. 4.

accuse Mr. Innes of venality in this matter'.[148] One journalistic way to spread an opinion is to deny it.

The *Mercury* took a less impassioned view. Cobb & Co had tendered, but Brown's tender was the lowest 'by a few pounds' and his surety was provided by Mr W. Rutledge, a mail contractor and wealthy squatter in the Western District of Victoria, and successful candidate for the seat of Warrnambool.[149] The newspaper believed Innes had carried out his due diligence, and although it would have preferred the profits to remain in Tasmanian hands, this result would arouse local entrepreneurs and enlarge 'the travel between the wealthiest and the pleasantest of the colonies of Australasia'.[150]

However, Innes's foray to the mainland produced a worse outcome than the PMG's preceding, local contract awards. In Victoria, Rutledge and Brown were accused of taking £2033 as an inducement to withdraw from the mail contract process, and of 'trafficking, not in tenders, but in contracts' by on-selling a contract for £4000.[151] As a consequence of this jobbery, they had been disqualified from the Victorian tender process for 1862. Brown explained these circumstances as sub-contracting, from which they had made a profit, but claimed that the government was no worse off as a result.[152]

Probably facing the same challenges on the route that had confronted Fisher, Brown imported horses and coaches. Samuel Page reduced his fares and made arrangements for 'a strong opposition',[153] presumably by vertically monopolising fodder and other enablers, as there were later reports of Brown's horses being 'almost starved to death'.[154] Brown's venture commenced with a great deal of anticipation. His eight-in-hand preparatory journey was rapturously received in Campbell Town, his drivers were delighted with the quality of the road, and there were expectations

---

[148] Ibid.
[149] *The Mercury*, 22 April 1861, p. 2.
[150] Ibid.
[151] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 23 November 1861, p. 5.
[152] Letter to the editor of the Warrnambool Examiner, THE VICTORIAN MAIL SERVICE, W. BROWN. Hobart Town, 23th Nov. 1861, in *The Mercury*, 26 November 1861, p. 2.
[153] THE NEW MAIL CONTRACT, and BROWN'S COACHING ESTABLISHMENT, in *Launceston Examiner*, 13 August 1861, p. 5 and 22 August 1861, p. 5.
[154] THE MAIL CONTRACT, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 5 July 1862, p. 4.

that the summer would bring visitors by the new steamers, who could travel from Melbourne to Hobart Town via Launceston for 50 shillings.[155]

Brown's coaches were broader and lower than the 'old English coach',[156] giving them a lower centre of gravity and hence more stability, and their design prompted the foretelling of the end of that old 'vehicular institution', the four-horse, English mail-coach.[157] Indeed, Brown's *Leviathan* coach carried 62 passengers from Launceston to Hobart Town[158] (in association with the visit of the English cricket team)[159], and coaches later managed the distance in ten hours.[160] Cobb & Co chroniclers made much of the *Leviathan* coach that was used in Victoria in 1860 but described it as 'a white elephant and a horse killer', unsuited for the road;[161] perhaps Brown imported it (or one, for *Leviathan* was a generic name)[162] for the next season to run on Tasmania's more suitable road surface.

Although Brown's innovations and distractions were entertaining, his results were very soon disappointing, and a series of accidents,[163] the dismissal of a driver for drunkenness,[164] and his failure to deliver the mail on time without external help brought about his default within nine months. The *Cornwall Chronicle* rather enjoyed cataloguing the shortfalls of that choice of the 'governmental lickspittles', Mr Brown, who was then 'a prisoner in Her Majesty's gaol at Hobart Town for debt'.[165]

The newspaper reminded its readers that it had acquiesced over the letting of the contract because the desired ends, ie lower fares and the avoidance of a monopoly, had justified the ways, viz disregard for due process; but the contract had been a 'dead failure', and Rutledge, the much lauded guarantor, had become an insolvent debtor.

---

[155] THE NEW COACHES, in *Launceston Examiner*, 29 August 1861, p. 4.
[156] Letter to the Editor of the Mercury, WM. BROWN Mail Contractor. Hobart Town, 10th Jan 1862, in ibid., 16 January 1862, p. 5.
[157] INTER-COLONIAL AND INTERNAL COMMUNICATION, in *The Mercury*, 22 August 1861, p. 2.
[158] Champion Visitors, in ibid., 2 December 1861, p. 2.
[159] THE ELEVEN OF ALL ENGLAND, in ibid., 19 February 1862, p. 2.
[160] FROM LAUNCESTON IN TEN HOURS, in ibid., 13 January 1862, p. 3.
[161] Rutherford, 'A History of Cobb & Co 1853-1955', Chapter 4, pp. 24-27.
[162] Peter Cuffley, *Buggies and horse-drawn vehicles in Australia* (Lilydale, Vic., 1981), pp. 73-75.
[163] eg ANOTHER COACH ACCIDENT, in *Launceston Examiner*, 7 December 1861, p. 5.
[164] THE MAIL COACH CONTRACT, in *The Mercury*, 12 September 1861, p. 2.
[165] THE MAIL CONTRACT, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 5 July 1862, p. 4.

Brown's horses were inadequate, he was a frequent small debtor who had rarely paid his workers, and the mail contract was 'one of the most disgraceful jobs that ever oppressed any people'.[166] There had been no visibility of the process and the government should have been thoroughly ashamed, yet it seemed not to be so.

The assignees of Brown's insolvent estate put up the whole of his coaching plant, including seven coaches, one of which carried 16 inside and 24 outside passengers, and 120 horses, along with the remainder of the mail contract at £2495 pa for unreserved sale.[167] Cobb & Co was reported to have sent an agent to the sale,[168] but the whole plant was, instead, passed to Samuel Page for £1250.[169]

Page had run the mainlander off the road in not much longer than it had taken Hyrons to default. At the auction, he acquired a mix of American coaches with up to 40 seats, which he could use in any later fare/capacity war; and if he had a bargain with his purchase of Mrs Cox, his £1250 for the Brown enterprise was either exceptionally good fortune or another piece of jobbery. Whichever, Page had placed himself in the box seat on the once again monopolised main road.

Conclusion

The opposition enterprises might be said to have trialled a number of business structures. Initially, associations of former-convict, small business consortia attempted to compete on the road, but failed. Similar arrangements by free settlers also foundered, implying that it was the very complex, penny packeted nature of their organisations, with the requirement that each component part had to make a profit, and not necessarily any lesser skills on the part of the convicts, which led to the association approach being unviable. On the other hand, the single owner or family approach offered centralised control with better strategic planning opportunities, and the ability to cross-subsidise between profit or loss making elements. As a consequence, there was a very high insolvency and turnover rate among the associated enterprises, whereas the family business ownership approach delivered more stability.

---

[166] Ibid.
[167] FRIDAY, 1st August. Unreserved Sale of the Hobart Town and Launceston Royal Mail Coaching Plant and Mail Contract, in *The Mercury*, 25 July 1862, p. 4.
[168] *Launceston Examiner*, 3 July 1862, p. 5.
[169] THE MAIL CONTRACT, in *The Mercury*, 2 August 1862, p. 4.

Networks played a significant part in both types of business approaches, but developed into factions and counter-factions as competition increased, and resulted in restrictive, anti-commercial practices including some physical mischief. However, the motivations of the key entrepreneurs were more than just commercial. Convict or free, social status was one factor, and politics also played a part, although genuine belief was probably subordinated to factional and self-interest. Newspaper correspondents using pen names increasingly commented, with evident partiality, upon the competition on the road, as did the newspapers themselves, and the government was a regular recipient of their advice and scorn.

The government's interest was the provision of good value for money in the delivery of the inland mails, which it sought to achieve through contracting. Opinion seemed to be that government's aim was achieved, as contractors could not deliver the service within the contracted price; in effect, contracted stage-coach enterprises subsidised the government. The risk for government was a potential failure to deliver the mail, but for contractors, it was insolvency. The interests of government and private enterprise were therefore, somewhat opposed. Consequently, the stage-coach entrepreneurs came to believe a monopoly on the road was necessary for viability, whereas the government opposed any monopoly because that would limit the number of potential tenderers. Newspapers, echoing Adam Smith, aligned themselves with the latter view, believing monopolies always resulted in higher fares, but ignoring businesses' imperatives to remain solvent.

It was the PMG's attempts to achieve the government's interests, which moved the relationship with the contractors away from the cooperative, but somewhat hidden, approach it had enjoyed with Mrs Cox, to a more hostile, competitive stance. This situation was exacerbated by the bureaucratic incompetence of Captain Smith, and his subsequent, penalising over-reaction in enforcing contract timetables. The press seized upon the situation with accusations of government jobbery, and Smith's successor, Innes, compounded the perception in his mainland negotiations, through which he hoped to circumvent the Tasmanian stage-coach entrepreneurs. The episode served not only to show that jobbery was not confined to government bureaucrats, but that the mainland entrepreneurs were much more skilled in such practices than any government functionary, or Tasmanian entrepreneur. In the matter, the *Mercury* was as naïve, optimistic and gullible as was the Colonial Treasurer.

The regulatory framework had become more restrictive for entrepreneurs. Whereas initially, the mail contract conferred a business advantage upon the holder, over time this assumption proved to be no longer valid. Indeed, a stage-coach venture began to be perceived as a loss-making business. Progressively therefore, monopoly and its means of achievement supplanted the mail contract as the highest priority way to achieve success. Possession of the mail contract therefore became, not the end itself, but a way towards an end.

If an enterprise was generally a loss maker, why did so many enter the industry? Initially, local experience was insufficient to have highlighted the potential for failure. Over time, the desired ends and motivations of private entrepreneurs catered for the shortfall. Mrs Cox and James Lord were sufficiently well capitalised to subsidise a public service for unselfish reasons, and they enjoyed a better working relationship with government than the other entrepreneurs. Also, this chapter has examined large business enterprises on the main road, later chapters will show a difference from smaller enterprises in community services on branch lines.

Monopoly on the road had become one way towards a desired end, and Samuel Page was the man who most consistently had been working towards monopoly. How would his approach, motivations, circumstances and achievements equip him to challenge Mrs Cox's, so far unmatched, claim for membership of the 'vital few'?

PART 2 – ENTERPRISES ON THE MAIN LINE OF ROAD

CHAPTER 6

THE PAGE ENTERPRISES

Samuel Page's father George arrived in VDL in 1821 as a free settler with apparent assets of £1180, on account of which he was granted 900 acres.[1] However, the goods probably belonged to one of his sponsors and were used to perpetrate a deceit upon the government. The Land Commissioners later remarked that Page had arrived 'without a shilling' and when asked how he had received so much land, he had replied that he had kissed his thumb when told to swear to the schedule.[2] Such behaviour might be expected of a convict, or described as larrikinism, or a colonial's disregard for government process; or, another interpretation is that a free settler premeditatedly defrauded the government, committed perjury and circumvented the Bible in order to maximise his grant.

Page's grant straddled Bell's line of road north of Jericho, where he subsisted and came into conflict with the authorities and his neighbours. When convicted for dealing in sly grog, he was fined £50, which he was unable to pay. However, he evaded the loss of his property by fabricating its transfer to his son John before the date of the offences, but this did not prevent him from being imprisoned for debt. Later, presumably having reacquired his property, he built the *Bath Inn* on his land alongside the main road, but continued his adversarial relationship up to the highest levels of government, all of which considered him a liar.[3]

The *Bath Inn* was regarded as a resort for undesirables, and in 1841, the road from Jericho to Oatlands was realigned, bypassing the inn; but very quickly the new section of road was temporarily closed as it had become dangerous 'in consequence of

---

[1] Maxine Young, *George Page 1772-1865: A Pioneer of the Southern Midlands* (Hobart, 2010), pp. 6-7.
[2] Journals of the Land Commissioners, in ibid., p. 23.
[3] Ibid., pp. 26-27 and p. 42.

the wet weather'.[4] The new section was contentious as, in addition to its fair weather limitation, it took a steeper route than the existing line of Bell's road, upon which Page's *Bath Inn* was situated, and bullockies continued to use the old road. Very possibly, the intent was simply to thwart George Page and not for any sound road-making reason, but the stage-coach business was lost, and Page had to build another inn on the new line.[5]

George Page was described as 'a Waterloo veteran',[6] and a soldier who had arrived with the First Fleet in 1788, who later 'came to the settlement at Risdon (1803) with Bowen'.[7] If so, he would have been a remarkably significant colonist. However, marines not soldiers accompanied the First Fleet, and Parish registers recorded Page as a resident of Bermondsey in London from 1800 until 1820. His occupations during that time were tanner, leather dresser and hair manufacturer;[8] there was no mention of his soldiering, although he might have joined the local militia.[9] In another example of progressive, retrospective gentrification, he was described as a 'military settler',[10] and later 'Captain George Page',[11] thereby ensuring he was not one of Wellington's scum, but rather a member of the officer class which formed the early basis of VDL society.

Samuel Page therefore had such a father as his example; his sister married a former convict, and society, neighbours and the government would almost certainly have pre-judged him by association.[12] Was Samuel to follow his father's lead or attempt to distance himself from that association? In any case, would he ever be able to successfully take a place in society without some taint, albeit non-convict? These considerations must have influenced his motivations and behaviour, particularly where status was concerned.

---

[4] Road Department, DG Roads (Fred. Forth), 17 April 1843, *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 12 May 1843, p. 531.
[5] Young, *George Page*, p. 49.
[6] C.A.S. Page, 'Page, Samuel (1810–1878)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne, 1967).
[7] K.R. von Stieglitz, *A History of Oatlands and Jericho* (Launceston, 1960), p. 27.
[8] Horse-hair was used to stuff soft furnishings, including the seats of coaches.
[9] Young, *George Page*, p. 13.
[10] *Launceston Examiner*, 3 April 1878, p. 2.
[11] OBITUARY, in *The Examiner*, 21 June 1927, p. 4.
[12] Young, *George Page*, p. 36.

Samuel Page's direct involvement on the main road lasted from his being a 27 year-old licensee in Oatlands in 1837, through to his exit at the opening of the main line railway in 1876. Almost forty years of stage-coaching experience, through the uncertainties of the colonial economy could not have left him unchanged. Personality was a factor in his motivations and behaviour, but that too would have changed over time.

There is confusion within the historiography between Samuel Page and his son, though newspaper articles of the time consistently differentiated by referring to the son as Samuel Page junior. As described in Chapter 5, the son only appeared as proprietor to circumvent the covenant with James Lord. At all other times before the end of 1876, Samuel Page was in charge of the main road operation.

Nic Haygarth recently stated that 'Samuel's wife Grace Page … ran the business in opposition to James Lord'.[13] Hobkirk also mentioned 'Mrs. Page',[14] but may have been referring to Samuel Page junior's wife (Louisa) who took over her insolvent husband's branch line service, only to become insolvent in her turn.[15] At her marriage, Grace Page was only able to place her mark on the register.[16] She had probably received little schooling and initially would not have had the skills required of a proprietor. Nevertheless, by the time referred to by Nic Haygarth, she may have had a role (as a proxy of Samuel Page) in supporting her son's apparent control of the business against Lord. Whatever the situation, it provides another example of an extended family business and the difficulties of identifying the roles of women within the business at that time.

Another confusing contender was Samuel Page of Glen Farm in the Huon whose obituary claimed he was 'one of the earliest settlers of the colony … and was for many years engaged in the coaching business between Hobart and Launceston'.[17] He was a farm labourer transported in 1840 for shooting and injuring a gamekeeper

---

[13] Nic Haygarth, *A History of the Northern Midlands* (The Northern Midlands Council, 2013), p. 55.
[14] J.F. Hobkirk, *Reminiscences of J.F. Hobkirk* (Launceston, 1904), p. 86.
[15] BANKRUPTCY, in *Launceston Examiner*, 14 June 1893, p. 7.
[16] Young, *George Page*, p. 39.
[17] *The Mercury*, 14 September 1895, p. 3.

while poaching.[18] However, unlike as in the case of James Lord, this Samuel Page's family did not feel the need to issue any correction. Erroneous pedigrees could be advantageous for some.

However, the real stage-coach Samuel Page was encumbered by his pedigree and acted to distance himself from his family and achieve acceptance from those hitherto hostile to his father. In Oatlands, he became licensee of the *Lake Frederick Inn*, owned by George Aitchison, one of whose patrons was Thomas Anstey, Justice of the Peace, Police Magistrate and antagonised neighbour of Page's father. Page renamed the inn the *Lake Dulverton Inn* as Anstey sought to rename the lake after his native village in England. From then on, Samuel Page remained aligned with the Anstey clan, and Oatlands based, which might explain why he supported Kermode, politically, against James Lord (*ante* Chapter 5).

Perhaps his distancing himself from his family also reflected their separate arrival times. George Page had gone ahead with the two oldest children, leaving his wife to follow later with the younger children, including Samuel, whose ethic might therefore have been more influenced by his mother than his father. The result was, however, that Samuel Page had no apparent capital with which to start his ventures, and no clear supportive network. He presumably built up his capital through his activities as a licensee, recalling a publican's opportunities for local banking, calling in loans guaranteed by property, and offering credit for sales of spirits. His acquisition of Cutts's yard introduced him to the sale yard business, where other bargains might be had, and his purchases of Mrs Cox and William Brown in particular, demonstrated his eye for a bargain.

Referring to Andrew Carnegie's observation that 'pioneering don't pay', Jonathan Hughes would probably have categorised Page as an innovator: one who 'changes the stream of the allocation of resources over time by introducing new departures into the flow of economic life'.[19] In this chapter, Page's actions regarding vertical monopoly in the logistic supply chain will be seen to closely match this description; and in his ability to survive by focusing on the viability of his business in

---

[18] Founders and Survivors, 'Samuel Page', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31360281.
[19] Jonathan Hughes, *The Vital Few: American Economic Progress and its Protagonists* (New York, 1973), p. 5.

the face of economic uncertainty and bureaucratic pressure, his management style will resemble that of the 'assessor-developer': who would take an 'idea and match it to the opportunity, always mindful of the organisational "bottom-line" constraints'.[20] Even so, for a self-made man, his actions were not always economically rational and his personal motivations and desired ends require examination.

When Samuel Page won the mail contract from Mrs Cox, he announced 'his mail coaches' in the *Launceston Examiner,* describing himself, unnamed, as 'proprietor' and 'CONTRACTOR for the ROYAL MAIL'.[21] He showed no such modesty in his southern advertisement, where 'SAMUEL PAGE having entered into contract with Her Majesty's Government' encouraged his customers to break their journey at his *Oatlands Hotel*.[22] It is difficult to resist the conclusion, throughout, that Page enjoyed linking his name with the 'Royal Mail'. His mention of 'Her Majesty's Government' also suggests his new sense of status and acceptance by government. Furthermore, he was alert to the partisan attitudes of the inhabitants and press of the north of the island and, as an outsider, wanted to minimise his profile as the supplanter of Mrs Cox in Launceston.

The question then would be how Page would balance the bottom-line business constraints, in the colonial economy, against his competitors, and with an apparent need for societal and governmental acceptance. Further personal motivations would also affect his rationale. This chapter will therefore examine four case studies focused on his commercial decisions, the first of which addresses management difficulties and the bottom-line.

Page's default on the mail contract

Following Hyrons' default on the mail contract, and Lord's abandonment, Page stepped in to take up the contract, and presumably thought the PMG would therefore have felt some gratitude towards him. Unfortunately, Captain Smith felt only the wrath of censure and reacted in an autocratic and unsympathetic manner.

---

[20] Charles Margerison and Dick McCann, *Team Management Systems, an overview* (Toowong, Qld., 1990), pp. 8-9.
[21] ROYAL MAIL LAUNCESTON AND HOBART TOWN, Oatlands, September 25, 1848, in *Launceston Examiner*, 30 September 1848, p. 1.
[22] HOBART TOWN & LAUNCESTON ROYAL MAILS. SAMUEL PAGE, in *Colonial Times*, 3 October 1848, p. 3.

Page would have been justified in feeling unappreciated and severely handled, yet wrote to the Lieutenant-Governor with a balanced and unemotional, comprehensive description of the colonial economic situation and the particular difficulties which confronted the stage-coach industry.

Referring to the 'drainage of the population', the depression in the adjacent colonies and VDL's transition 'from a convict to a free colony', he noted the loss of a regular supply of labour and a deficiency in passengers to make the business viable.[23] One effect was that only the worst of characters remained to be employed as ostlers, grooms, coachmen etc, and such employees pilfered the supplies for the horses rendering them incapable of performing their duties. Page complained 'To prevent this is impossible.'[24] He was obliged to entrust his property to 'men who have no character to lose', and it seemed the entire supply chain was riddled with persons taking a cut along the way. Page's mention of character was probably equally telling about his concern for his own reputation.

He then took the remarkable step of naming two employees to the Lieutenant-Governor as examples of his plight. The first was Frederick Peers, a drunken guard who was responsible for all manner of irregularities. Peers was a groom from Lincolnshire transported in 1844 for stealing shears and with a previous conviction for stealing bridles.[25] Second was Mark Solomon (a Londoner with a 'Jew Scar' on his right upper lip, transported for life in 1818)[26] who after discharge from duties as coachman had been taken on by the PMG as a guard, and from whose influence Page 'had everything to dread'.[27] Page betrayed an element of despair in managing his difficult workforce.

Next he turned to the increased costs of doing business, which he said could not have been foreseen at the time he undertook the contract. The cost of oats, hay and straw had increased three to four-fold, to 'a price unheard of before on Earth' and

---

[23] Letter, Samuel Page to Lt-Gov Denison, dated Oatlands 20 July 1853, in Colonial Secretary's Office, CSO 24/1/227/8710, (Hobart, Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office, 1853), p. 233.
[24] Ibid., p. 234.
[25] Founders and Survivors, 'Frederick Peers', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/ai55576.
[26] Founders and Survivors, 'Mark Solomon', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31380100.
[27] Colonial Secretary's Office, CSO 24/1/227/8710, p. 234.

accordingly he asked for relief from his fines; the value of horses had similarly increased, as had 'every other thing connected with coaching'.[28] This statement was at odds with Denison's earlier expression of increasing economic confidence, but statistics showed the nature of the shock.

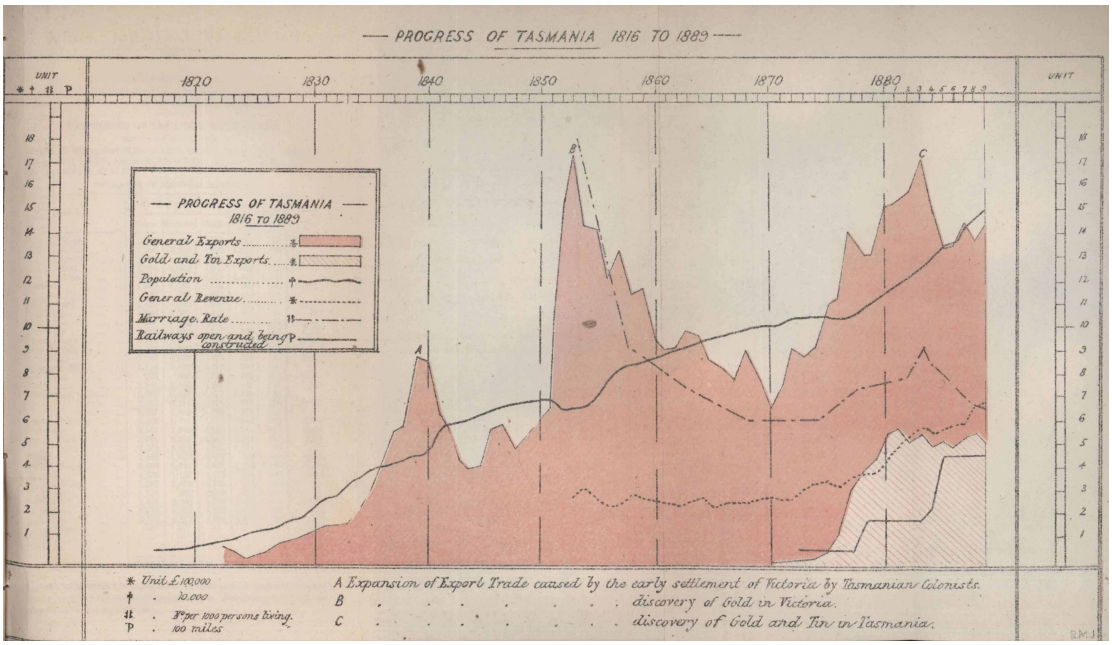


Fig 6.1 – Progress of Tasmania, 1816-1889, Walch's Almanack 1891, showing colonial exports (red) and population (solid line) over time[29]

Fig 6.1 graphically displays an economic shock between 1851 and 1853 as the value of the colony's exports leaped from £650,000 to £1,725,000 (ie almost threefold) before falling back to its original figure by 1870, most of which was achieved by 1860. This spike was attributed to exports to Victoria following the discovery of gold there. Seen in isolation, this might have been a good result, but its effect on the local economy was to increase domestic costs by a similar proportion, viz Page's claimed three- to four-fold. There was also a dip in the colony's overall population from 1853-55. Page's account was accurate and he had been caught by an unforeseeable event.

[28] Ibid., pp. 235-36.
[29] Chart, PROGRESS OF TASMANIA 1816-1889, in J Walch, *Walch's Tasmanian Almanack* (Hobart, 1891), between pp. 238-39.

He went on to say that he estimated the cost of running the mail coaches at between £12,000 and £14,000 pa, noted the cost to government was only £1400, and considered if he was to be fined, it would be 'better at once to abandon the contract'.[30] From a logistical perspective he observed that when forage was cheap, he had been able to contract the feeding of the horses to innkeepers, but that he currently had to provide that function himself 'for the whole length of the island'.[31] He attributed the difficulty in maintaining the schedule to the time wasted by guards and postmasters at the fourteen mail delivery points on the route, but also remarked that 'unless the guard carries a timepiece as in England' there was no accurate record of the schedule under which he was being penalised.[32] Recall also, that the PMG and not the contractor employed the guards; Page really did have little control over the delays at the stages.

Perhaps most resented was the implication that he was not properly caring for his horses, but 'dishonest men' were stealing his forage throughout the supply chain. Page did not intend to bring under His Excellency's notice:

> the extraordinary offensive mode of letter writing adopted by the Postmaster General and I shall only publish it in case of necessity it has been such as can never have been expected from an official functionary.[33]

The working relationship between the PMG and contractor was in tatters, and would have been exacerbated by Page going over the PMG's head to the Lieutenant-Governor, although he had little choice.

Perhaps Page's factual narration accounted for the bureaucrats' response, which was to quibble over his filling the back seats of the coach 'in defiance of the Postmaster General', while directing him to comply.[34] Page wrote again, this time to the Colonial Secretary, acknowledging that he had, at times, fully loaded the coach, but even that did not stem the losses, and asked for some allowance over his 'occasional non performance of the strict letter of the contract'.[35] The PMG remained unsympathetic, which was why the Lieutenant-Governor called for an investigation.[36]

---

[30] Colonial Secretary's Office, CSO 24/1/227/8710, p. 236.
[31] Post Script, to letter, in ibid., p. 239.
[32] Ibid., p. 237.
[33] Ibid., p. 238.
[34] Note dated 22 July, in ibid., p. 240.
[35] Letter, S. Page to the Colonial Secretary, dated August 25th 1853, in ibid., p. 250.
[36] Memo, PMG re Page letter of 25 August, in ibid., pp. 251-52.

In his information to the Board, Page provided detailed comparisons of costs at the commencement of the contract with those then pertaining: keep for horses had been 12s per week, now £2; at two stations, horses were stabled at 22s each per week, at all others he had to provide the forage, which varied from £6 up to £16 per ton according to location, but he needed to cart the hay some distances, and at some cost, although at the present time there were not 10 tons of hay to be had on the whole road; wages for grooms had been 14s per week, now 30s to £2; and horses, which in 1852 had been £10-15, were up to £50 each. In the quibbling over the use of the back seats, Page estimated their value to the contractor at £1-2000 pa. Regarding fares, passenger numbers were falling, and any increase in fares would further reduce customer demand.[37]

The PMG told the Board that Mrs Mills had offered to take up the contract at £4000 pa but required the whole coach, less the seat for the guard. She would not take it for £3000 under any conditions.[38] The PMG then conceded the requirement for the guard to have all seating at the back of the coach, which the Board adopted as a recommendation. The Board concluded it would be 'an act of justice … and good policy' to grant some recompense to the contractor as the carriage of the mail was of such importance to the interests of the community. However, they limited the amount of his bonus as he had not been willing to raise his fares, and they did not recommend a remission of his fines because they feared, as the PMG had asserted, Page would regard such as an indication of their future lack of resolve.[39]

Before finally concluding, the Board (which included the Treasurer and the Auditor) conducted a financial risk assessment for the government if Page were to abandon the contract and forfeit his £1400 bond (implying the bond was equal to one year's quantum). Assuming a best possible case contract at £3000 pa (which they already knew was not obtainable) and that they paid Page the £40 per month bonus every month, the government was still better off by £420 pa if he remained.[40] It therefore suited the government to retain Samuel Page; but while they had confirmed

[37] Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Mail Contract, dated 10 October 1853, in ibid., pp. 270-73.
[38] Ibid., p. 274.
[39] Ibid., pp. 275-78.
[40] Ibid., pp. 278-79.

their own interest, they had not examined the contractor's balance sheet to gauge his response.

With costs estimated at £14000 pa and a contract at £1400 pa, they had offered him an uncertain bonus of £480 and equally uncertain £1-2000 in additional passenger seating. At best, the outcome delivered Page £3880 pa, which equated to an annual loss of over £10,000. Page had explained his situation and asked for understanding and help. The bureaucracy looked only at one side of the problem. Therefore, caught in a financially unsustainable situation, in the shock of the inflation spike, Page sought to sell out as quickly as possible, and he did so to James Lord.

To recap from Chapter 5, Lord bought Page for £6000 with a ten-year covenant of no competition on the road from Page. Page presumably thought the 1853 inflationary shock would be an enduring situation, hence the ten-year pledge. Why then did Lord believe he could succeed in the market when Page could not? The difference lay in logistics. Lord had integral horses, property and forage along the line of route, for which Page was vulnerable to contracted support with uncontrollable costs. Lord's overheads and risk were therefore much less, and he would expect to raise the mail contract price at the next iteration.

Either deliberately or coincidentally, Page began to build a property portfolio, which delivered him considerable capital (from sheep), and an equivalent horse and forage, logistic capability on the road. The 1853 economic shock was a spike, whose rapid collapse was probably as unforeseeable as its onset, and before the end of the decade the colony's economy and Page's circumstances enabled him to attempt to circumvent the covenant and re-enter the road. In selling the business back to Page, Lord's £8750 price probably reflected his initial £6000 purchase, plus the £2000 he had sought in damages, and £750 for costs: not one of Page's bargains, but a reasonable settlement.

Again, since the business was always commercially risky, what motivated each of these men? Lord, the establishment sportsman with inherited wealth and property had entered the business almost accidentally. He loved all things equine and enjoyed driving four-in-hand; stage-coaching was perhaps an extension of his hobby. He had outlasted Samuel Page, and would have won his law-suit, but chose instead to settle and move on, becoming the Member for Oatlands in the House of Assembly, a

political ambition in which he had earlier been thwarted by the faction in which Samuel Page had played a part.[41]

Page on the other hand, was a self-made man with no such inherited wealth, and a family background which was at best unhelpful. He seemed particularly attentive to his reputation, and when unjustly treated by the PMG, and consequently the establishment, he would have felt the need to re-establish his standing. His increasing wealth through property meant he had no commercial incentive for stage-coaching; his re-entry was therefore more about status, and showing the establishment that it needed him. Page was not a man to tolerate loss of face.

There were also operational lessons to be learned from activities on the road after the departure of Mrs Cox. The essence of successful operations is the coordination of effort and the provision of supporting logistics to achieve the desired outcomes. Coordination of the PMG's requirements and workforce, into a contracted transport and scheduled delivery service, with vehicles requiring repair and maintenance, and dependent upon wayside replenishment in remote areas, subject to hostile competition and other environmental and economic factors was necessary to deliver the agreed outcome.

Another concept, that of the 'centre of gravity, a centre of power and movement … on which everything depends' was relevant to stage-coach operations.[42] The provision of horses and forage was the element upon which everything depended and the 1853 inflation spike revealed that weakness in Samuel Page's operation. Ironically, he had already identified that critical weakness when he targeted Mrs Mills' logistics, but in 1853 Page's supply chain was still insecure. James Lord adopted the same approach in preventing Joseph Fisher's entry onto the route, and Page effectively targeted William Brown's logistics when driving him off the road. A vertical monopoly through the enabling process had become more important than the horizontal monopoly on the route.

The third party in this combative environment, which should have been cooperatively integrated, was the government. Government, as customer of the service being provided, had acted with a short-term, self-interested focus and divisive

---

[41] OBITUARY. THE HON. JAMES LORD, in *The Mercury*, 23 May 1881, p. 2.
[42] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (London, 1982), p. 389.

punitive approach. By ignoring, or not understanding, the broader market, government alienated the service providers and drove them towards achieving a monopoly as a way to ensure business viability. The lesson Page would have learned from his experience was that he needed to look after himself: government would not do so.

Jobbing the Contract

The government however, despite its experiences, continued an uncooperative and counter-monopoly policy, using bureaucratic power-play tactics. Innes's subsequent tender process leading to Brown's contract was inept, but even then the government pursued its course. At the next rotation, the contract was let to another Victorian company, Robertson Wagner & Co,[43] although this was widely reported as Cobb & Co;[44] the two were in effect the same company, and expectations were once again raised of a superior service and the introduction of Melbourne style hotels.

This time, no suggestions were made of jobbery within the tender process, and it was announced that Robertson Wagner & Co had signed the bonds and were making arrangements with innkeepers and for stabling.[45] Very quickly however, the *Mercury* reported 'Robertson and Wagner, have, under a threat of a troublesome opposition, extracted a considerable sum of money from the pocket of Mr. Samuel Page'.[46] The amount inferred was £700.[47] The statement was ambiguous: was Page the source or the target of the 'troublesome opposition'? The *Mercury's* further comments were similarly open: questioning whether Robertson & Wagner had tendered for a contract they had no intention of fulfilling, or had 'shrank from at the last moment'.[48]

William Brown's earlier justification of contract jobbing as sub-contracting would have alerted the Tasmanian press to Victorian practices. But it was equally possible that Samuel Page having lost the contract exerted pressure upon the Victorians, perhaps reminding them of Brown's experience. Questions were raised in parliament about the process, but the response again reflected only the government's

---

[43] MAIL CONTRACT, in *Launceston Examiner*, 6 June 1867, p. 4.
[44] THE NEW MAIL CONTRACT, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 19 June 1867, p. 5.
[45] HOBART TOWN AND THE SOUTH, in *Launceston Examiner*, 13 July 1867, p. 5.
[46] THE MAIL CONTRACT, in *The Mercury*, 15 July 1867, p. 2.
[47] *Launceston Examiner*, 16 July 1867, p. 5.
[48] *The Mercury*, 15 July 1867, p. 2.

interest: there had been no deceit; Robertson & Wagner had won the contract and paid the deposit; Samuel Page then entered into the contract with government at the same price, viz £1690.[49] Government's interest ceased because it had achieved its aim, ie the lowest possible tender price.

With regard to Page's contract, the *Mercury* noted that the government had 'no other alternative under the circumstances'.[50] Page forced the government back into dealing with him and preserved his monopoly. By 1867 the economy was almost back to where it had been in 1851, when the contract price had been £1400; £1690 might therefore have been manageable, and perhaps a £700 bribe/buy out was strategically cheaper than an expensive price war. Who drove the negotiations, Page or Robertson & Wagner? Discussions were probably unrecorded and in secret. Page did not like to lose, even against the powerful opposition from the mainland, and his pastoral enterprises would have allowed him to subsidise the cost of winning. Thanks to Samuel Page, the mighty Cobb & Co was not to enter the Tasmanian market.

A period of stability entered upon the main road, whose condition attracted comments of appreciation and nostalgia. Colonel Mundy was 'reminded faintly, of bygone days. The road itself is perfect. The London and Bath, or Brighton roads … were not better'.[51] Anthony Trollope considered it 'as good as any road in England, and … in appearance exactly like an English road'.[52] A correspondent, Job Muggs: 'sat upon the well appointed conveyance of Samuel Page, and passed over 120 miles of the best old fashioned road in all the colonies'.[53] The road and its stage-coaches were becoming a tourist attraction.

Page himself achieved some acceptance from the establishment as he cancelled the morning coach to provide horses for the Duke of Edinburgh's journey from Hobart Town to Launceston during the Royal visit,[54] and as four-in-hand driving

---

[49] PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA. HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY. Tuesday, 3rd September, 1867. THE MAIL CONTRACTS, in ibid., 4 September 1867, p. 3.
[50] Ibid., 15 July 1867, p. 2.
[51] Godfrey Charles Mundy, *Our antipodes, or, Residence and rambles in the Australasian colonies: with a glimpse of the gold fields* (London, 1852), p. 231.
[52] Anthony Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand* (London, 1968), vol 2, p. 47.
[53] Letter to the editor, JOB MUGGS, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 1 May 1869, p. 4.
[54] THE LAUNCESTON COACH, in *The Mercury*, 13 January 1868, p. 2.

had by then become a fashionable sport, the Duke himself drove the coach, accompanied by the Governor.[55]

The Crash at the Red Rocks

Page maintained his monopoly until late 1872, when opposition, run by Alfred Burbury, reappeared. During the period of renewed competition, a passenger, Edwin Elliott, was killed in an accident involving Page's *Leviathan* coach, details of which illustrated the increasing complexity of stage-coach enterprises and their environment.

Regarding the accident, the *Launceston Examiner* wasted no time in denouncing the proprietors who encouraged or permitted the 'contest' on the road and whose disregard for human life was a consequence of the evils of monopolies. Stating the cause of the accident, viz that the brake had been tied up, could not have been an act of carelessness as determined by the inquest, it went on to attack juries for their 'senseless and stupid verdicts', hoped for some means by which those responsible might yet be brought to account, and feared for the adverse effect the unsafe coaching practices might have on the tourism industry.[56]

The *Examiner's* northern rival was more factual and less passionate. The jury at the inquest returned a verdict of 'accidentally killed', but censured the driver for not ensuring he had a working brake before descending the hill, being 'clearly of opinion that had the break [*sic*] been used, the accident would not have happened'.[57] The *Stage Coach Act (1836)* had been repealed and replaced by the *Police Act (1865)*,[58] which also consolidated regulations for hackney cabs and carters. While most of the stage-coach provisions were incorporated unchanged, the provision regarding accidents caused through misconduct being a misdemeanour was omitted. Therefore, since the inquest attributed the death to an accident, there was no further course under criminal law.

---

[55] THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH IN TASMANIA. THE JOURNEY TO THE NORTH, in ibid., 14 January 1868, p. 2.
[56] *Launceston Examiner*, 3 January 1874, p. 2.
[57] THE FATAL COACH ACCIDENT NEAR OATLANDS, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 31 December 1873, p. 2.
[58] His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly in Parliament, 'An Act to consolidate and amend the Laws relating to the Police Government of Municipalities and Municipal Districts, and for other Purposes relating thereto. [29 September 1865]', in *29 Victoria No 10 (1865)*, The Government of Tasmania (Hobart, 1865), Schedule 1.

Accordingly, the deceased's widow brought a civil action, seeking £4000 for damages and loss, sustained through the negligence of Samuel Page, which it was alleged caused the death of her husband.[59] The Chief Justice presided, and the plaintiff was represented by the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General; Page engaged Mr Byron Miller of Launceston and pleaded 'not guilty' to the charge of negligence.

Who was the woman who could command such prestigious representation? Mrs Elliott was the pregnant, second wife of a second-rate tailor. They were travelling with his two children from Melbourne, where he had become insolvent through jobbing (also described as gambling) 'under the verandah' in mining shares.[60] The deceased's life was not insured. The involvement of the highest levels of the Hobart legal establishment might therefore have been in response to the press's frustration at the ineffectiveness of criminal law, a charitable attempt to help an unfortunate widow, an opportunity to inflict a penalty on the now wealthy Samuel Page, or from an expectation of the associated award of considerable legal costs.

The facts of the matter seemed to be that Mr Elliott and another passenger had been unlawfully sitting on luggage atop the coach, even though advised that seating was available. The strap, which normally restrained the brake, had broken en route and the driver, Samuel Barrett, had rigged a rope to hold the brake off the wheel. Although this rigging had allowed the brake to be used, following the jarring of the unsprung *Leviathan*, the rope became entwined in a hook and prevented its use when critically needed. As the coach was negotiating a turn at the Red Rocks, descending Weedon's Hill approaching Oatlands, it overturned and Elliott was thrown off, over the fence and onto a tree-stump. He was taken to Oatlands but died soon afterwards from internal injuries.

Through the course of testimony from both sides, a number of points relevant to the *Police Act (1865)* were established. The driver was 'quite sober', and was not racing (Section 55);[61] indeed, the rate of progress had been less than that of the night

---

[59] LAW INTELLIGENCE. SUPREME COURT. CIVIL SITTINGS WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17TH, 1874, ELLIOTT (ADMINISTRATRIX) v PAGE, in *The Mercury*, 18 July 1874, pp. 2-3.
[60] Ibid.
[61] His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly in Parliament, 'An Act to consolidate

mail. The vehicle was the *Leviathan* that Page had acquired from William Brown, but some of the outside seats had been removed because it was considered top-heavy. It was licensed to carry 16 passengers inside and 13 outside; the actual number of passengers at the time of the accident was 11 outside with four women and three children inside. The coach was therefore legally fit for public use (Section 51) and being operated within the limitations (Section 41).[62]

Due process and procedural fairness were evident during the proceedings. One witness testified that the *Leviathan* had been racing on a previous occasion, but the Chief Justice ruled out that information as irrelevant and prejudicial to the case. Inferences that the deceased had consumed 36 brandies, which in conjunction with ammonia might have accelerated his death, were shown to be false, as was a rumour that the vehicle had been officially restricted to a maximum speed of 8 mph. Finally, attempts to call into question Mrs Elliott's chastity were critically dismissed.[63]

Laws of evidence, expert opinion and even courtroom humour demonstrated a sophisticated procedural approach, and the innovative use of photography of the crash site was a technological aid for the witnesses delivering their evidence. James Burdon the coachbuilder who daily maintained Page's coaches said the coach was perfectly serviceable at the start of the journey, was safe at 10 mph, and that the presence of two passengers weighing 300 lbs atop luggage on a swaying coach would have been dangerous. Perhaps surprisingly, Page's old rival, James Lord was called as a witness for the defence. He established his credentials as an expert by saying 'I have had experience in coaching since I was born', 'It must have been the experience of a perambulator?' replied the Solicitor-General, provoking laughter from the courtroom.[64] However, Lord appeared as a character reference for the driver, whom he referred to as 'Sam' and who had worked for him before going to Page's.

Samuel Barrett had driven for Page for 15 years, and was with Lord for six years before that. He was therefore a very experienced driver who had only been

---

and amend the Laws relating to the Police Government of Municipalities and Municipal Districts, and for other Purposes relating thereto. [29 September 1865]', Section 55.

[62] Ibid., Sections 41 and 51.

[63] *The Mercury*, 18 July 1874, pp. 2-3.

[64] LAW INTELLIGENCE. SUPREME COURT. CIVIL SITTINGS. THURSDAY, JUNE 18TH, 1874. Before Sir Francis Smith, Knight, Chief Justice, and Juries of Seven. Elliott (ADMINISTRATRIX) v. Page, in ibid., 19 July 1874, pp. 2-3.

involved in one previous accident. Nevertheless, one witness did refer to him as 'a low blackguard fellow' and he was probably an ex-convict: a London leather dresser transported in 1841 for housebreaking in Herefordshire with a previous conviction for receiving stolen goods.[65] Lord had therefore likely taken him on soon after the expiry of his 10-year sentence and his subsequent employment record implied he was not one of Russel Ward's nomads; perhaps the former convict nomadic trait applied more to a mainland, bush, harsher climate scenario.[66] The guard, George Chalker, was probably also a 10-year expiree: a blacksmith from Bristol transported in 1845 for housebreaking, but with a previous conviction for highway robbery.[67] So, Page's workforce even at this late stage included ex-convicts, though by then less problematic than during the economic spike. Also, Barrett's moving from one enterprise to another exemplified Page's skilled workforce attraction and retention difficulties when there was opposition on the road. A monopoly conferred an exclusive workforce recruiting position.

However, the issue for Page was the question of his liability for the accident. The legal doctrine under contract law was to be found in the relationship between master and servant. Implicit in their contract, under an English case of 1858, was the expectation that the driver would use 'reasonable care and skill in the performance of his duties', and that the master's responsibility was to provide a safe and legal work environment.[68] The same principle applied to Page's contract with the passengers. Byron Miller submitted that Page had taken every reasonable safety precaution, had the coach examined every 24 hours, and employed a very experienced driver.[69] If such an argument were accepted, any negligence was on the part of the driver, but the action had been brought against Page.

---

[65] Founders and Survivors, 'Samuel Barrett', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31031103.
[66] Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend* (Melbourne, 1966), p. 88.
[67] Founders and Survivors, 'George Chalker', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/ai11606.
[68] Harmer v Cornelius (1858), 5 C.B. (N.S.) 236, in G.C. Cheshire and C.H.S. Fifoot, *The Law of Contract* (London, 1964), pp. 150-51.
[69] *The Mercury*, 19 July 1874, pp. 2-3.

Two further aspects regarding liability were applicable; both fell under the law of tort, and both were undergoing change after 1837.[70] The first, employer's liability, referred to the master's liability for a tort done in the course of a servant's employment, but was restricted to its effects upon other employees.[71] The second, vicarious liability, under which a master might incur liability for damage caused to a third party by his servant, was reasonably resolved by 1849.[72] This latter situation applied in Elliott v Page.

Byron Miller also introduced the defence of contributory negligence, specifically questioning the extent to which Elliott's actions were responsible for the accident. Again, this legal concept had undergone change during the century, differed between common and statute law, and affected the plaintiff's rights to claim compensation and in what amount.[73] Nevertheless, 'the rule that the negligence of a servant in the course of his employment is imputed to his master' was applied in Elliott v Page.[74] The Attorney-General argued that 'the question for the jury was simply whether Barrett, the driver, had been guilty of negligence; and, if they were to impute contributive negligence to the deceased, then what was the extent of that contributive negligence'.[75]

In his summation, the Chief Justice agreed with the Attorney-General's point, which he said was founded upon an Imperial Statute and imported into the colony. (The question of a master's vicarious liability was not addressed in the colonial statute, which was restricted to definitions, the treatment and punishment of servants, and the relevant authority of magistrates and Courts.)[76] If the injury had been sustained through the action of the driver, the liability rested with the defendant as

---

[70] There is no exact definition of tort: 'the law of tort may be said to be concerned with the allocation or redistribution of those losses which are bound to occur in our society'. J.A. Jolowicz and T. Ellis Lewis, *Winfield on Tort* (London, 1967), p. 1.
[71] Ibid., pp. 144-45.
[72] Reedie v London & North Western Ry. (1849) 4 Exch 244, in ibid., pp. 630-31.
[73] Jones v Boyce (1816) - a stage-coach case, p112; but Saunders v Spencer (1567) established the principle, ibid., pp. 102-13.
[74] Ibid., p. 114.
[75] *The Mercury*, 19 July 1874, pp. 2-3.
[76] His Excellency Sir Henry Edward Fox Young, Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of the Island of Tasmania and its Dependencies with the Advice and Consent of the Legislative Council, 'An Act to amend the Law relating to Masters, Servants, and Apprentices. [7th February, 1856]', in *19 Victoria No 28 (1856)*, Colonial Government of Tasmania (Hobart, 1856).

though the action had been his own. Given that this was a developing legal framework involving common and statute law, with judgments regarding contractual relationships, vicarious liability and contributory negligence, perhaps it was not surprising that the foremost legal minds in the colony were, and probably sought to be, involved.

For stage-coach enterprises and other businesses, the decisions and implications were far reaching and potentially costly. The proprietors, (including innkeepers, horse breeders and coach manufacturers) were progressively liable for compensation for and between workers, and to third parties for the actions of themselves and their employees. This was additional to their liability for goods in custody or in transit (as updated by statute in 1868).[77] For the bottom line, either they would have to take out insurance or sustain the cost penalty on each occurrence. The amount of the liability was dependent upon the unpredictable judgment of a jury and the skill of the defence.

Considerations of a possible amount in Elliott v Page were therefore formulaic but subjective. The Attorney-General introduced a deposition which addressed Elliott's earning capacity over several years prior to his death. The Chief Clerk of the Lands Titles Office, who had been employed in calculating annuities for the government, used the 'Carlisle' table to show Elliott, aged 37, had a remaining life expectancy of 29.64 years and the value of a £100 pa annuity would amount to £1529. No explanation of the £4000 sought by the plaintiff was offered. Given the *Launceston Examiner's* hope for some further justice, the amount might seem to be punitive, but the concept of punitive or exemplary damages did not become established until the 20th century.[78]

Byron Miller pointed out that Samuel Page had paid the deceased's medical and funeral expenses, and claimed it would be unreasonable to pay Mrs Elliott an annuity based on her insolvent husband's annual salary. Furthermore, she could earn a living as a needlewoman, was still young, and might 'find a more suitable partner than

---

[77] His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly in Parliament, 'An Act to amend the Law relating to Advance made to Agents intrusted with Goods. [17 September, 1868]', in *32 Victoria No 13 (1868)*, The Government of Tasmania (Hobart, 1868).
[78] Jolowicz and Lewis, *Winfield on Tort*, p. 674.

Mr Elliott had been to her'.[79] The Chief Justice said the jury must decide whether the damage was caused by the neglect or default of the driver; if so, any contributive negligence by the passenger would not exculpate the driver. If the jury found for the plaintiff, the wife and children were not entitled to a full annuity because had he lived, the deceased would have shared in it. The jury should state their apportionment of damages to the wife and to the children.

The jury attributed the accident to the driver's inability to use the brake, did not consider Elliott's position on the coach had contributed to his death, and awarded £500 damages, being £300 for the wife and £100 each to the children.[80] The *Launceston Examiner* considered £500 was less than Page would have had to settle for if the plaintiff's claim had not been 'outrageously exorbitant', and believed 'Mr Miller's zeal and tact in managing the defence, undoubtedly secured what some regard as a triumph for Mr Page'.[81] Costs were expected to be £200-300. No reputational damage was sustained, as later that year the Governor's coach was horsed by Samuel Page and driven by Sam Barrett.[82]

Opposition from Alfred Burbury

Page had reintroduced the *Leviathan* to increase his capacity on the road against competition from Alfred Burbury. For two and a half years, the pair matched[83] or undercut each other variously on the length of the main road,[84] through truncations of the main road route at Campbell Town or Oatlands, on the branch line from Campbell Town via Fingal to Falmouth[85] (including the branch mail contract), and on branches to Bothwell and Jerusalem.[86] Price cutting resulted in fares between Hobart

---

[79] *The Mercury*, 19 July 1874, pp. 2-3.
[80] Ibid.
[81] LEGAL, in *Launceston Examiner*, 11 July 1874, p. 2.
[82] Ibid., 27 October 1874, p. 2.
[83] A. BURBURY'S STAGE COACH, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 9 December 1872, p. 3.
[84] PAGE'S LINE OF DAY AND NIGHT COACHES. REDUCTION OF FARES, in *Launceston Examiner*, 4 February 1873, p. 1S.
[85] BURBURY'S COACHES, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 18 April 1873, p. 2S, 8 September 1873, p. 4 and 15 October 1873, p. 3.
[86] BURBURY'S MAIL COACH, in *The Mercury*, 25 July 1873, p. 1, 5 May 1874, p. 1 and 5 September 1874, p. 1.

Town and Launceston as low as 15s inside or out,[87] and 2s 6d between Oatlands and Hobart Town.[88]

Early 20th century family records described Alfred Burbury's father, Thomas, as the son of an ensign who fought at Waterloo, with a background in high-class stock breeding in Warwickshire and from a family with 'command of money'.[89] Reportedly, Thomas, foreman of a silk weaving factory, arrived in Hobart Town in 1832 with his wife and daughter.[90] However, the record showed that he was transported for life in 1832 for machine breaking.[91] A later family account acknowledged he had initially been sentenced to hang, but had been reprieved after a petition of his fellow weavers, who also subscribed to send out his wife and child later.[92]

By 1835, Thomas Burbury was mustered as a constable, and in 1842 a private soldier wrote home to Warwickshire having seen Burbury 'who was transported for burning Beck's factory down', but who had received a free pardon, was the (Oatlands) Chief District Constable, owned a butcher shop and several farms, and was reputed to be worth £5-6000.[93] Before entering the stage-coach business, Alfred, the son of this prosperous convict policeman, was a Freemason and a butcher in Hobart Town.[94]

The competition on the road quickly progressed beyond the commercial. Some 'miserable poltroon' apparently drugged four of Burbury's horses in Campbell Town, prompting Burbury to offer a reward for information leading to a conviction.[95] Two months later, a mob greeted Page's covered conveyance as it arrived in Oatlands with

---

[87] BURBURY'S REGULAR LINE OF COACHES, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 8 July 1874, p. 4.
[88] REDUCTION OF FARES PAGE'S DAY COACHES, in *The Mercury*, 17 April 1873, p. 1.
[89] A.W. Burbury, *Chronicles of the Burbury Family in Tasmania and England* (Austin's Ferry, Tas., 1939), p. 2.
[90] Ibid., p. 3.
[91] Founders and Survivors, 'Thomas Burbury', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31050083.
[92] Wynifred Sinclair and Elizabeth Christensen, *Thomas Burbury 1809-1870: A Pioneer of Van Diemen's Land* (Melbourne, 1979), p. 16.
[93] Letter to the Coventry Herald, John Chantrill, April 1842, in ibid., p. 36.
[94] MASONIC Lodge Room, Murray-street, Hobart Town, 29th June, 1871, in *The Mercury*, 29 June 1871, p. 1 and 5 September 1871, p. 1.
[95] A Dastardly Act ... and REWARD, in ibid., 15 March 1873, p. 2 and p. 3.

'groans and hisses' and a volley of stones, narrowly missing a child who was travelling inside;[96] during the night, the 'American canvas' of the coach was ripped by a knife, and damage was done to one of the panels. This time it was Page who offered the reward.[97]

The Mercury considered these 'cowardly and purely spiteful proceedings' were a disgrace to the Oatlands township, and would have an adverse effect on the colony's inter-colonial and international reputation.[98] Although political and sectarian motives were prompting violence in the United Kingdom, 'the roughs of Oatlands' could not be compared with activists in Ireland. Those opposing Page's monopoly should do so by patronising the opposition, but Page had the right to conduct his business without it being subject to the 'permission of the rabble'. Burbury objected to his name being associated with the incident, especially in print, and sought to distance himself from any direct involvement.[99]

These incidents illustrate a number of social behaviours. The drugging of Burbury's horses was not necessarily the action of his competitors; the harming of a master's valuable animals was a common recourse of a disgruntled employee (Burbury was not swift to pay his workers).[100] Russel Ward noted the 'egalitarian class solidarity' and 'collectivist sentiment', which resulted in behaviour acceptable within the lower class but which was shocking to 'middle class contemporaries':[101] a group to which Page belonged.

Thus when the intimidating behaviour did not end, Page wrote to the Oatlands Council, reminding them he was a considerable ratepayer (another developing charge on the cost of business enterprises) entitled to police protection and asking what the police had been doing on the night of the 'assault and disturbance of the peace'.[102] Among the names of the councillors were Burbury and Lord. A report from the local

---

[96] Malicious Mischief at Oatlands, in ibid., 15 May 1873, p. 2.
[97] £5 REWARD, in ibid., 16 May 1873, p. 3.
[98] Ibid., 16 May 1873, p. 2.
[99] Letter to the Editor, THE DAMAGE TO PAGE'S COACH, Alfred Burbury, dated Oatlands, May 16th, 1873, in ibid., 19 May 1873, p. 2.
[100] Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: Democracy*, vol. 2 (South Melbourne, 2004), pp. 109-10.
[101] Ward, *The Australian Legend*, pp. 28-30.
[102] OATLANDS. (From our own Correspondent.) MUNICIPAL COUNCIL. Letter from Samuel Page dated Hobart Town, 21st May, 1873, in *The Mercury*, 12 June 1873, p. 3.

superintendent of police stated that about 100 persons had been present at the arrival of the coaches, the police had not heard of stones being thrown, though that might have occurred without them knowing, and that the 'little temporary excitement' seemed to be dying out.[103]

William Gerrard, the Superintendent of Police who presented the report, had killed a man during a drunken brawl and was convicted of manslaughter and transported from Lancashire in 1837.[104] His indifferent, felon police report into a matter concerning the son of a felon police predecessor was therefore perhaps unsurprising. That predecessor was also a machine breaker, and William Gerrard too came from a Luddite county. While machine breaking could be described as a political crime during the development of trades unionism, in criminal terms it was simply damage to the property of a business competitor.[105]

In Oatlands, the riotous faction behind the Burburys adopted Luddite, anti-competitive tactics in threatening and damaging Page's coach, and was aided by the felon police's inaction. Recall too, the establishment's suspicions of the association between Freemasonry and Jacobinism, and the secret nature of friendly societies intended to thwart government efforts at preventing combination.[106] Among the colonial stage-coach entrepreneurs, Joseph Fisher (*ante* Chapter 3) and Alfred Burbury were Freemasons: one a machine breaker, the other the son of a machine breaker (William Ellis and Benjamin Hyrons were also Freemasons). In a small population, even this limited sample might have been more than coincidence; conspiracy theories aside, it possibly represented a larger network and was an indicator, not only of political radicalism, but of radicals' tactics adapted for anti-commercial purposes.

The competition had become (Oatlands-based) local, personal and destructively factional. The mob's behaviour might also have been allowed to continue unchecked due to the power that factions were able to wield over

---

[103] Report from William Gerrard, Superintendent of Police, dated Oatlands Police-office, May 23rd, 1873, in ibid.
[104] Founders and Survivors, 'William Gerrard', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31160647.
[105] E.P. Thompson, *The making of the English working class* (Ringwood, Vic., 1968), pp. 249-52 and pp. 309-11.
[106] Ibid., pp. 186-87 and pp. 460-61.

'shopkeepers, constables, schoolteachers, local preachers' in a small community with 'slack religious and moral supervision … [and] unpoliced street and meeting place'.[107]

In a purely commercial war, Page had the stronger capital underpinning, a larger variety of equipment and a broader logistic base. By June 1875, Alfred Burbury was insolvent, with liabilities amounting to £13,852 13s against assets of only £1870; a meeting of creditors announced an initial composition of 5s in the pound.[108] Thus, the assets were only sufficient to meet just over half of the initial 25% composition, and new legislation had been introduced.

For any agreement to be reached, 'a majority in number, and three-fourths in value, of the creditors' was required.[109] For any discharge of the bankrupt, either a dividend of not less than ten shillings in the pound (ie 50 per cent) had to be paid, or the creditors were required to make a special petition, to the satisfaction of the Court, to excuse the debt on the grounds that it had been incurred through circumstances outside the debtor's responsibility.[110] Burbury's assets fell well short of satisfying the 50 per cent dividend, and without knowing the identities of all the creditors (it is quite possible Samuel Page had been buying up Burbury's promissory notes) there was no reason why his creditors should excuse the debt. Settlement through arrangement or composition was therefore not available.[111]

Burbury's case moved to full bankruptcy and William Jones was appointed as trustee.[112] Jones was a storekeeper and carter in Oatlands,[113] and may have been one of 352 'William Jones' in the convict records. He might also have been one of the

---

[107] A.N. Wilson, *The Victorians* (London, 2002), p. 45.
[108] OATLANDS, in *Launceston Examiner*, 24 June 1875, p. 3.
[109] His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly in Parliament, 'An Act to provide for the Distribution of the Assets of Insolvent Debtors amongst the Creditors. [18 October, 1870]', in *34 Victoria No 32 (1870)*, The Government of Tasmania (Hobart, 1870), sub-section 15(8).
[110] Ibid., Section 47.
[111] Ibid., Sections 112 and 13.
[112] IN THE SUPREME COURT OF TASMANIA. IN BANKRUPTCY. IN the matter of an Extraordinary Resolution for Liquidation by Composition of the Affairs of ALFRED BURBURY of Oatlands in Tasmania Stage Coach Proprietor, in *The Mercury*, 29 July 1875, p. 1.
[113] Burbury, *Chronicles of the Burbury Family in Tasmania and England*, p. 33.

creditors, but that did not preclude him from becoming trustee.[114] As trustee, he could sell the bankrupt's assets either by auction or in a private sale 'to any person'.[115] Accordingly, Jones bought the property of Burbury's estate himself.[116] Although it was legal, his action was ethically questionable, and one wonders about the impartiality of any independent valuation. Jobbery was an opportunity for a trustee too.

Burbury, as an undischarged bankrupt, had three years in which to meet the 50 per cent dividend without risk of foreclosure, but after that, any creditor could take action against his property in satisfaction of any debt.[117] With a large debt outstanding, and no property from which to raise any offset, Burbury's bankruptcy presumably remained undischarged. Later, he sold corned beef in Hobart, and offered sweepstake tickets on the Melbourne Cup and Colebrook Plate, before briefly moving into the urban transport business running omnibuses in Hobart.[118] Under the new legislation, his bankruptcy severely limited his further ventures long after Samuel Page had died.

Conclusion

Page sold his coaching enterprises at the opening of the main line railway and died within two years. The only commendation in his very brief obituary was that he had 'earned the hearty respect of all who knew him'.[119] A subsequent article mentioned his coaching enterprises and his wealth, and that he left 'a widow and a large family to lament his loss',[120] begging the question would no-one else do so?

---

[114] His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly in Parliament, 'An Act to provide for the Distribution of the Assets of Insolvent Debtors amongst the Creditors. [18 October, 1870]', sub-section 13(1).
[115] Ibid., sub-section 24(6).
[116] OATLANDS. POLICE COURT. Thursday, 27th January, 1875 [sic], in *The Mercury*, 28 January 1876, p. 2.
[117] His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly in Parliament, 'An Act to provide for the Distribution of the Assets of Insolvent Debtors amongst the Creditors. [18 October, 1870]', Section 53.
[118] CITY COMPANY, in *The Mercury*, 7 September 1880, p. 2, 14 September 1882, p1, 17 October 82, p. 1 and 6 April 1889, p. 1.
[119] OBITUARY, in ibid., 1 April 1878, p. 2.
[120] THE LATE MR. SAMUEL PAGE, in ibid., 2 April 1878, p. 2.

Alison Alexander commented the 'obituary could not list any worthy community activity or find any personal qualities to praise'.[121] He was a founding member and financial backer of the Tasmanian Racing Club, trustee of the Hobart Town Public Cemetery, and a Justice of the Peace, but all these appointments came at the very end of his life, implying that before then he concentrated, single-mindedly on his business interests.[122] Even 'Venison', the turf correspondent of the *Queenslander*, whose intent was presumably to praise, could only reflect upon his visit in 1851 and remark that Page had just 'sunk £10,000 in running one Hyrons off the road'.[123] Page's (ruthless?) image, reputation and motives deserve examination.

Even when acknowledging Page's service in picking up the mail contracts when others defaulted, the newspapers immediately bemoaned the evils of monopoly. The press always described a monopoly as a threat to cheap fares, and did not consider the market, costs or the sustainability of the enterprises. Government also perceived a monopoly as a threat to attaining the lowest price tender, or as a potential loss of bureaucratic control over the entrepreneurs. For the enterprises, the mail contract became a financial loss, but it was an essential ingredient in achieving a horizontal monopoly. The travelling public, interested only in the cheapest fares, accepted the view of the press. Friends of a monopolist were therefore very few, and if Page lacked popularity, that was not surprising.

His business and social environment was multi-layered, and most of the layers were veneered. Whether convict or free settler, families sought to gentrify their pedigrees, discover military hero ancestors and form similarly situated networks to achieve and sustain invented status. Page was concerned about character and reputation and sought respect, but it was largely withheld by society and denied him by the bureaucracy, probably because his capability and rational effectiveness exposed their incompetence and jobbery. For Page, seeking acceptance from the establishment was a weakness. His former convict workforce was very difficult to manage, especially the guards employed by the PMG, but they were essential to his operations. Also, his eventual wealth would have inflamed resentment.

---

[121] Alison Alexander, *The Southern Midlands - a history* (Burwood, Vic., 2012), p. 47.
[122] TASMANIAN RACING CLUB, in *The Mercury*, 13 April 1876, p. 2, 31 October 1876, p. 3 and 23 December 1876, p. 3.
[123] Letter to the editor, THE LATE MR. PAGE, 'Venison', in ibid., 21 May 1878, p. 2.

Among the many self-interested networks, the northerners perceived him in the southern division, but the south did not embrace him. The midlands became the *locus operandi* of the main road stage-coach entrepreneurs, but a midland faction with a machine breaking, felon police heritage actively opposed him, resulting in a local and persistent feud of ugly proportions. Within such a society, Page's ethics, while not faultless, were surprisingly sound.

He opportunely managed his ventures during an ever more complex legal environment, with increasing administrative costs. He outlasted the mainland challengers; and in the face of the 1853 inflation spike, he rationally exited the business and avoided insolvency, the fate of so many other entrepreneurs. He came to understand that the stage-coach business was a logistic industry which itself vitally depended upon logistics: the supply of horses and fodder was both a critical weakness and an essential enabler. Therefore, Page built a vertical monopoly within the enabling process, and used it in corporate attack and commercial defence.

In terms of effectiveness and endurance Samuel Page was probably the most successful of the stage-coach entrepreneurs, but his wealth creation, though very significant, was not the result of his stage-coach enterprises. At the outset of this chapter, Page was proposed as an innovator as a consequence of his adaption of the supply system into a vertical monopoly, and as an opportunist assessor-developer with an eye on the bottom line. Jonathan Hughes might also place him in the organiser category, noting such characteristics as: a man whose private ambitions embraced or at least advanced the public interest; 'not an attractive man in business'; and 'no hero to the historians'.[124] Business was not a popularity contest, and Page would have been satisfied with his obituary's 'hearty respect' epitaph; indeed, respect might have been Page's most desired end.

[124] Hughes, *The Vital Few: American Economic Progress and its Protagonists*, p. 11.

PART 3 – TRANSITIONS

CHAPTER 7

ELEMENTS AND ENABLERS WITHIN AN INTEGRATED INDUSTRY

Stage-coach enterprises were commercial businesses subject to cost/benefit considerations. However, without a monopoly on the road and a vertical monopoly over supply and support, each was necessarily a part of a business association, subject to the quality of enabling elements, and vulnerable to industrial and economic factors beyond their control.

Although they drew upon British materiel and experience, the penal colony's social and government structure presented different challenges for the management of the businesses and workforce. In part, the stage-coach enterprises were themselves elements of a social engineering experiment. They were also contributing elements of the broader island economy.

This chapter will therefore attempt to quantify the direct costs of the industry and its elements, identify and apportion the indirect costs, and assess the tangible and intangible value of the broader industry to the island's society and economy.

Coaches and Harness

The supply of suitable vehicles was an essential element of the coaching industry, and initially importation provided the solution. However, as early as 1809, a locally made timber carriage was constructed in the north of the island and put into use in just seven days.[1] The development of a transport support base in Hobart Town was mentioned in Chapter 2, where the supply of increasingly sophisticated vehicles was the product of a mix of imports, either from Britain or the other colonies; of new or used vehicles; in whole or as components for local assembly; or by the local

[1] Letter, Capt Brabyn to Lieutenant-Governor Paterson, dated Launceston 18th February 1809, in Frederick Watson, *Historical Records of Australia. Series III., Despatches and papers relating to the settlement of the states* (Sydney, 1921), vol 1, p. 695.

construction from (patent) English designs, often with colonial modifications.[2] By 1830, George Tuckwell claimed the ability to make or repair carriages 'equal to any imported from London,' and the transport business had facilities for sale, auction, hire, and service provision, as well as finance arrangements to suit.[3]

In the north of the island, with a smaller population, the situation developed more slowly, but by 1831, the *Cornwall Hotel* was becoming the Launceston hub of the coaching and private travel industry.[4] General auctioneers offered larger vehicles for sale,[5] and some 'would take wool or wheat in exchange;' John Edward Cox even offered a Calcutta-built gig. Henry Palmer, a London coach-builder and harness maker, established a business in Launceston, where he employed a painting 'tradesman, equal to any one in England' (probably Gould, see later). His manufactory offered a full range of coach-building skills, and he supplied spare parts through his agent in London.[6] Thus by 1836, Launceston also possessed the capability to manufacture any coach of the time.

Of course, the vehicles constructed by the coach-builders included light carts, private gigs and carriages, and even hearses and vendors' vans.[7] Therefore, while stage- and mail-coaches were among the largest vehicles constructed, they represented only a portion of the coach-builders' business. In 1839, only two 'coachmakers' were officially listed for VDL, increasing to seven in 1849.[8] No figure was given for harness makers, but seven saddlers were operating by 1846.[9] Thus the industry was compact, grew steadily, had a relatively secure market, and was regionally based.

Indeed, the pattern, north and south, was one of continuity. Coach-builders developed their business, trained their workforce, and usually sold out to one or more

---

[2] *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 5 August 1826, p. 3 and 13 August 25, p. 3.
[3] *The Hobart Town Courier*, 24 July 1830, p. 1.
[4] *Launceston Advertiser*, 14 December 1831, p. 385.
[5] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 16 May 1835, p. 3.
[6] *Launceston Advertiser*, 5 December 1833, p. 3, 4 August 1836, p. 2, 6 October 1836, p. 2 and 16 May 1835, p. 3.
[7] eg T. Gould's 'Fancy Bread and Biscuit Maker', in Miranda Morris-Nunn et al., *Launceston's industrial heritage : a survey* (Launceston, 1982), p250.
[8] J. Moore, *The Hobart Town Directory and General Guide* (Hobart Town, 1852), p. 10.
[9] James Wood, ed. *Van Diemen's Land Royal Kalendar, colonial register, and almanack* (Launceston, 1848), p. 215.

of their employees. Although there were some periods of local competition, the major succession in the south through to the end of the century was: Tuckwell, Fraser, Burdon (& Son), Fowler & Yeoman, Cramp Bros, and Vout & Chisholm; and in the north, Palmer, Stewart, Crocker (& Son), Payne (& Son), and Anderson & Lahey. Peter MacFie noted the family nature of the businesses,[10] which frequently advertised for apprentices.[11]

Given their international connections, the principal coach-builders were large enterprises, and their workshops each employed up to 40 tradesmen.[12] Most business owners were free settler artisans, although some, such as James Burdon, who married the daughter of a convict, had convict connections. Burdon also employed assigned convicts such as James Williams, a coach body maker from Norwich, sentenced to 15 years in 1845 for highway robbery,[13] and took apprentices from Point Puer.[14] The workforce thus was not 'always free', but the necessary quality of work demanded particular skillsets and work ethics. MacFie stated that in late 1836 the convict artist William Beulow (sic) Gould was assigned as a coach painter to Palmer;[15] however, the record showed that Gould was freed by servitude in June 1835.[16] Regardless of the terms of employment, colonial craftsmen were capable of very high quality products.

For instance, the *Courier* commended Fowler & Yeoman for their craftsmanship in the new *Perseverance* coach for Joseph Fisher, with its mail patent axles, superb cushioning and beautiful decoration: 'The upper portion of the body is of course black, the lower a bright yellow picked out with crimson. On each door-panel is emblazoned the Royal Arms, and upon the "stern" the Arms of Hobart Town'.[17] Signifying colonial pride, the coach became the subject of a painting in its

---

[10] Peter MacFie, 'Coachbuilding and related crafts in Tasmania', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, vol. 43, no. 2 (1996), p. 82.
[11] eg Alexander Fraser, in *The Courier*, 2 March 1850, p. 1.
[12] MacFie, 'Coachbuilding and related crafts in Tasmania', p. 78.
[13] Founders and Survivors, 'James Williams', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/om5288.
[14] MacFie, 'Coachbuilding and related crafts in Tasmania', p. 81.
[15] citing Darby, G. 'William Beulow Gould', Burnie, 1980, p. 13, in ibid., p. 86.
[16] Founders and Survivors, 'William Buelow Gould', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31150397.
[17] The PERSEVERANCE, in *The Courier*, 5 January 1854, p. 2.

own right.[18] The completion of a stage-coach was always a matter for local celebration and new vehicles were paraded around the town(s) with much fanfare, usually on the key bugle. Fraser's new coach for George Mills equalled 'any Royal Mail ever manufactured by the renowned Mr. Vidler, of Millbank, Westminster'.[19]

Thus there was a relationship between the coach-builders and operators, but it never seemed to amount to an exclusive agreement. Unlike the developmental period in England, the coach-builders did not own the coaches. In a broadly north/south accommodation, the coach-builders supplied their regional customers and also conducted turnaround maintenance and repair and modification on the vehicles they supplied.[20] For example, the Coxes favoured Alexander Fraser,[21] and Page[22] and Lord[23] favoured his successor, James Burdon in the south; Hyrons used Stewart in the north.[24] However, these main road operators did require maintenance support at the far end of their routes,[25] and even purchased vehicles from suppliers at the other side of the island. North and south, the coach-builders supplied an increasing number of mail-cart and coach operators on the progressively developing branch routes, and eventually well outside their terminal hubs.[26] The business associations might therefore be best described as preferred supplier arrangements, and not exclusive agreements.

Collectively however, the local coach-builders did not always enjoy a monopoly of supply. When William Brown of Geelong won the mail contract he imported at least five stage-coaches.[27] He had a further six-horse coach built by McPherson in Hobart Town, which marked the local industry's transition to the

---

[18] Henry Gritten, *Main Road at New Town ...* 1856. Stage-coach in landscape, QVM 1949, FP 440.
[19] MILLS's NEW COACH, in *Colonial Times*, 25 November 1845, p. 3.
[20] *The Mercury*, 19 July 1874, pp. 2-3.
[21] NEW COACH, in *Colonial Times*, 18 April 1848, p. 3.
[22] A NEW COACH, in *Launceston Examiner*, 7 November 1872, p. 2.
[23] THE HARKAWAY, in *Colonial Times*, 29 October 1853, p. 2.
[24] New Coach, in ibid., 1 October 1850, p. 2.
[25] COACH ACCIDENT, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 19 December 1846, p. 981.
[26] VOUT, CHISHOLM & CO., COACHBUILDERS, in *The Mercury*, 1 June 1899, p. 2S.
[27] *Launceston Examiner*, 13 August 1861 p. 5, 22 August 1861 p. 5 and 27 August 1861 p. 5.

manufacture of American coaches as well as English.[28] From then on, an international mix of models was locally constructed.

The workforce was similarly vulnerable to external pressure. In England by 1838, railways had been authorised to carry the mails and stage-coaches were being withdrawn from service,[29] resulting in unemployment for skilled tradesmen and operators alike, creating a push factor for migration and threatening the security of colonial jobs. Local sentiment was invoked by the *Chronicle's* praise of Stewart's manufactory 'being wholly the production of colonial labour',[30] but the labour market difficulties were exacerbated by the exodus to the Victorian goldfields and the consequent inflation spike.

Although Fowler & Yeoman were prepared to pay a body maker £1 per day,[31] they resorted to importing 'an entire set of Mechanics … from some of the best London factories'.[32] At least the coach-builders had an opportunity to recruit good workers, unlike Samuel Page's predicament as an operator at the same time. Migration of skilled workers continued as Britain's industry declined: 17 coach-makers and trimmers arrived in 1862, along with 32 saddlers and harness-makers.[33] Nevertheless, despite the availability of suitable tradesmen, costs were not sustainable for some. Fowler was indentured to his creditors[34] and his assets were sold off.[35] John Lockett's insolvency was superseded, and Henry Crocker became bankrupt, but perhaps exacerbated by financing his sons in dubious mining ventures.[36]

Some coach-builders did, however, benefit from the gold-rush. Both Fraser[37] and Burdon exported vehicles to Victoria, albeit not stage-coaches; Burdon's vehicle

---

[28] Ibid., 10 April 1862, p. 5.
[29] James Laver, 'The Great Age of Coaching', in N.C. Selway, *The Regency Road: The Coaching Prints of James Pollard* (London, 1957), p. 29.
[30] Colonial resources, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 4 September 1850, p. 581.
[31] WANTED, in *The Courier*, 23 February 1854, p. 1.
[32] F. P. FOWLER COACH BUILDER, in ibid., 14 March 1855, p. 3.
[33] EMIGRATION FROM GREAT BRITAIN IN 1862, in *Launceston Examiner*, 28 January 1864, p. 4.
[34] Notice to Creditors, in *The Hobart Town Mercury*, 26 October 1857, p. 2.
[35] FOWLER'S STOCK-IN-TRADE, in *The Courier*, 25 November 1858, p. 1.
[36] INSOLVENT COURT, in *Launceston Examiner*, 8 December 1860, p. 3 and 13 April 1872, p. 5.
[37] A NEW GOLD VAN, in *Colonial Times*, 9 April 1852, p. 2.

was his own design and constructed entirely from English timber.[38] Colonial coach-builders were thus well able to incorporate imported technology and designs, or adapt or create vehicles to meet regulatory or customers' needs, including for export.

Only one VDL built, colonial stage-coach of an English, sprung design has survived, and is at Entally House, Hadspen under the custodianship of the Tasmanian Parks Department. A brass (maker's?) plaque attached to the vehicle attributes it to Alexander Fraser in 1853. Therefore Fraser, a Scottish free settler who had disembarked in Hobart Town en route to Sydney due to his wife's illness, built the vehicle probably for Samuel Page to operate on the main road.[39]

The coach's rarity is one element of its significance for Tasmanian heritage and the vehicle is at risk. Its association with Alexander Fraser, the principal pioneer of VDL stage-coach construction and close associate and trustee of the Coxes, is another element of heritage significance. Beyond mentioning that he was a coach-maker, and became a Wesleyan in Hobart, Fraser's entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* concentrates exclusively upon his later life in Victoria.[40] Alexander Fraser and his c1853 stage-coach, deserve further research, recognition and heritage protection.

Horses

A stage-coach was an organism, of which the horses were an essential, animate element providing the motive power. Kennedy estimated the pulling power of a draught horse at one ton on a flat surface, reducing by up to 75 per cent on rough surfaces or in hilly terrain.[41] A horse's defence mechanism is to kick or run, introducing behavioural uncertainties. The nature of stage-coaching demanded horses with stamina, which could sustain speed throughout the stage and contribute as members of a team. Breeding met the first requirement, and training and development the latter. Broadly, the wheelers' prime responsibility was haulage, and the leaders

---

[38] NEW GOLD ESCORT CARRIAGE, in ibid., 29 October 1853, p. 2.
[39] Renate Howe, 'Fraser, Alexander (1802–1888)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne, 1972).
[40] Ibid.
[41] Malcolm J. Kennedy, *Hauling the Loads: A History of Australia's Working Horses and Bullocks* (Melbourne, 1992), p. 22.

guided the team, which was especially important at night. New horses learned the trade in what amounted to an apprenticeship.

The aim of the operation was to guarantee a fast schedule along the route, and British regulation and experience informed the colonial practice. For instance, contracted stages were to be short enough to avoid stoppages for watering horses;[42] this requirement influenced the standardisation of a stage at around ten miles, depending upon gradient.

A full-sized coach-horse was an overgrown hunter, and the preferred breed was the Cleveland Bay, which Kennedy considered 'the ideal animal for Australian conditions'.[43] Mares were crossed 'with a three-part bred horse, or sometimes a thoroughbred'.[44] The resultant foal was either a tall coach-horse or was suitable for use in four-in-hand vehicles or as a hunter or fine saddle horse. The Cleveland was also suitable for racing with high weights over the four-mile distance common at the time,[45] further explaining its popularity with colonial owners. Selective horse breeding was thus another element of the stage-coaching business, and enterprises needed to consider the benefits or disadvantages of contracting for horses, against those derived from ownership.

Overall numbers, and type and rate of usage were also planning and business factors. Nimrod considered one horse per double mile over a ten-mile stage to be optimum, and each of the ten horses for a ten-mile stage would therefore work four consecutive days and rest on the fifth. With such employment a horse in a fast coach had a life-in-service of about three to four years, but the type of horse produced meant it could be subsequently sold on for less strenuous employment.[46] Thus in planning for the main road in VDL, an entrepreneur would ideally have 120 horses, and would turn those over every four years. Of course, not all entrepreneurs adopted the ideal model.

---

[42] Thomas Wilson and John Dover, 'Articles of Agreement dated 20 June 1793', in *POST 10/251*, British Post Office Archive (1793).
[43] Kennedy, *Hauling the Loads: A History of Australia's Working Horses and Bullocks*, p. 46.
[44] William Youatt, *The Horse* (London, 1860), p. 45.
[45] Stanley Jepsen, *The Coach Horse* (Cranbury, New Jersey, 1977), p. 49.
[46] Harold Esdaile Malet and Nimrod, *Annals of the road : or, notes on mail and stage coaching in Great Britain* (London, 1876), pp. 351-52.

Consumption figures for town horses were estimated at 1.4 tons of oats or corn, and 2.4 tons of hay per head per year.[47] A fast coach horse would have consumed more. A 120-mile enterprise would therefore have needed 120 horses, each requiring around four tons of feed, totalling almost 480 tons per annum. This figure was for one enterprise on one road.

When Samuel Page mentioned his difficulty in keeping fodder up to his horses in an unfavourable market, the size of his requirement was considerable. In English experience in 'fertile, high-rainfall areas a horse could be sustained on about five acres of grass and crops',[48] but in Australian conditions and particularly in adverse seasons the need to transport large volumes of feed to specific locations would have exacerbated Page's logistic burden. Alongside any commercial decision to own horses, the need to insulate the enterprise from the difficulties and vagaries of supply was another encouragement towards a vertical monopoly.

The animals had characteristics and personalities which required handling. Regulations catered for some risks, but directions, such as those regarding not leaving the horses unattended, were often poorly observed.[49] When a New Norfolk coachman stepped from the box, he passed the reins to a boy, whereupon the horses set off prompting one of the female outside passengers to jump from the coach, fracturing her skull.[50] During a stop in Oatlands, the horses of Mrs Cox's southbound mail-coach 'after being changed, were, through gross negligence, left to take care of them selves'. When two passengers resumed their outside seats 'the horses started off at a furious rate' and the men jumped from the coach, one was knocked unconscious and had to be taken back to the inn until sufficiently recovered to proceed to Hobart Town for further medical treatment.[51]

---

[47] US Board of Agriculture figures for 1910-31, in F.M.L. Thompson, 'Nineteenth-Century Horse Sense', *The Economic History Review* 29, no. 1 (1976), p. 78.
[48] Kennedy, *Hauling the Loads: A History of Australia's Working Horses and Bullocks*, p. 3.
[49] His Excellency Colonel George Arthur Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for the Regulation of Stage Coaches', in *6 William IV No 12 (1836)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart Town, 1836), Section 10.
[50] COACH ACCIDENT, in *Launceston Examiner*, 11 December 1847, p. 3.
[51] ANOTHER SERIOUS COACH ACCIDENT, in ibid., 7 February 1849, p. 6.

The operating environment was dangerous for the team. A horse 'was killed on the spot' in an (unexplained) accident, which occurred as the team was being changed at Perth.[52] A horse 'of the Royal Mail stud' (ie Mrs Cox's) was killed after it fell as a result of mechanical failure and was run over by the coach on a fast, downhill stretch near Cleveland.[53]

The requirement for the horses to provide the braking effect for the coach was an engineering and procedural difficulty, and a physical stress upon the horses. Colonel Mundy provided a sympathetic overview of the coach and horses on the road. When a guard urged his coachman to get a move on, Mundy considered 'the poor little horses … were no match for the crowded coach'. Describing coming down the hill into Launceston in the dark with 'a top-heavy coach, wretchedly weak wheel horses, and nothing but a "lively faith" to supply the mundane safeguards of drag-chain, breeching, bearing reins and blinkers', the coach finally over-ran the horses (ie the horses could not retard the coach) and only the skill of the young driver enabled the near runaway coach to be brought into town intact.[54]

Malcolm Kennedy remarked: 'The actual operation of a four-horse team may seem a commonplace, but in terms of the complexity of harnessing and driving such a team at a trot or canter there is no modern comparison.'[55] Kennedy's assessment goes some way towards explaining the high regard in which stage-coach drivers were held and their burgeoning egos.

The double mileage system of allocating horses to sectors on the route meant that the animals were familiar with their surroundings, which was particularly helpful at night. One night however, the horses of the mail to Hobart Town were startled by a road party truck, which had been left in the road. They shied and the coach struck the truck causing both the driver and guard to be thrown off. Somehow the coach 'righted itself, and the horses proceeded on their journey into Oatlands, where they were stopped by a constable, who was not a little surprised to see the vehicle come steadily

---

[52] ACCIDENT, in ibid., 20 May 1848, p. 6.
[53] ROYAL MAIL, in ibid., 12 February 1848, p. 6.
[54] Godfrey Charles Mundy, *Our antipodes, or, Residence and rambles in the Australasian colonies: with a glimpse of the gold fields* (London, 1852), pp. 243-44.
[55] Kennedy, *Hauling the Loads: A History of Australia's Working Horses and Bullocks*, pp. 45-6.

in without any attendants'.[56] The horses knew what was required, but the driver's reputation and ego must have been somewhat tarnished.

Horses are naturally nervous. A barking dog, which rushed out from the side of the road near the *Half-way House*, caused the *Royal Mail* day coach horses to shy, capsizing the coach.[57] Another horse was frightened by a donkey and bolted, subsequently crashing into the New Norfolk coach.[58] Inexperienced horses were a challenge for the drivers. When a young colt turned 'restive at starting', it upset the mail coach outside the *London Inn* on Spring Hill.[59]

Changing teams and starting off was an unsettling and difficult time for the nervous animals. A passenger on the box suffered a broken collar-bone and two fractured ribs when he and the driver were thrown off as 'the leaders of the coach … turned short round at starting'.[60] Whereas momentum was a stopping constraint on the road, overcoming the inertia in the coach was the difficulty on start. Horses start quickly, unlike bullocks, which apply a stronger steadier pull. In another logistic consideration, bullocks not horses were therefore the preferred means of unbogging coaches.

The breeding, temperament and behaviours of horses were thus very important considerations in the safe and effective operations of stage-coach enterprises and further encouraged entrepreneurs to own the whole process; but the entrepreneurs had more than a commercial interest in horses. A love of, perhaps an obsession with, horses was probably the one characteristic, which all the major/successful stage-coach entrepreneurs shared. Geoffrey Blainey thought 'Perhaps no country in the world worshipped the horse with the same fierce veneration as Australia in the nineteenth century.'[61]

---

[56] *Launceston Examiner*, 29 November 1845, p. 4.
[57] COACH ACCIDENT, in ibid., 23 June 1847, p. 4.
[58] *Colonial Times*, 24 July 1838, p. 7.
[59] COACH ACCIDENTS, in ibid., 13 November 1846, p. 3.
[60] ACCIDENT (Britannia), in *Launceston Examiner*, 17 January 1849, p. 6.
[61] Geoffrey Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance shaped Australia's History* (Melbourne, 1982), p. 122.

Of course, horses were not indigenous to the island, and by 1815 only 85 horses were recorded at Hobart Town, and 22 in Port Dalrymple.[62] Ken Dallas noted: the colony's early preference for (cheaper) bullocks, rather than horses, for draught or farm work; the variety of origins for imported horses (including the Cape, Arabs from Persia, Spanish horses from Valparaiso, and ponies from Sumatra); and that the Cleveland Bay was not introduced until 1827, attributing its importation to the Cressy Company.[63] The increase in horse imports was therefore associated with the 1820s wave of free settlers.

Progressively, pure Arabians such as *Bagdad* were offered for breeding, 'Terms – £8, and 8s. the Groom';[64] and Cleveland horses bred by the VDL Company were offered for sale.[65] By 1840, stud horses travelled to stand in the north and south of the island.[66] 'TRIUMPH. A pure Cleveland Carriage Horse' was available at '£8 8s. each Mare, groomage included'.[67] This period coincided with the early development of the stage-coach industry. Even at that time, for an enterprise requiring up to 50 horses per year, stud fees were another, considerable cost against profitability, which might be avoided through vertical monopoly; and surplus or unsuitable stock provided an extra source of revenue. Unsurprisingly therefore, the major entrepreneurs all developed their own studs spread along the route.

Ownership of thoroughbred stock and high quality horses provided other opportunities. James Lord kept racehorses,[68] and horses for hunting and entertaining his friends, among them Lieutenant-Governor Denison and Governor Young. John Lord and Samuel Page were both horse breeders who became trustees of the Tasmanian Racing Club.[69] Horse racing was perhaps the one area within which Samuel Page achieved a degree of social acceptance.

---

[62] Letter, Lieutenant Governor Davey to Governor Macquarie, dated 18 November 1815, in Watson, *Historical Records of Australia. Series III., Despatches and papers relating to the settlement of the states*, vol. 2, p. 137.
[63] K.M. Dallas, *Horsepower* (Hobart, 1968), pp. 6-7 and pp. 62-63.
[64] ENTIRE HORSES, Lately Imported from Calcutta, BAGDAD, in *The Tasmanian and Austral-Asiatic Review*, 12 March 1830, p. 8.
[65] Cleveland and Suffolk Horses, in ibid., 6 March 1835, p. 74.
[66] CARLTON YOUTH, in *Colonial Times*, 22 September 1840, p. 8.
[67] *Launceston Advertiser*, 1 October 1840, p. 4.
[68] eg LIST OF ALL HORSES ENTERED FOR THE GRAND MIDLAND STEEPLE CHASE, in *Colonial Times*, 5 October 1854, p. 3.
[69] *The Mercury*, 13 April 1876, p. 2.

Horse races were widespread and frequent social events, and businesses in themselves. Prize money was substantial, social status could be achieved, and the races provided another series of networks, as did horse sales and auctions. Australians' love of horses transcended rationality. Geoffrey Blainey thought racing results had a greater news value than that of wars or national calamities and noted that whereas overseas national museums prioritised artefacts such as the Elgin Marbles or dinosaur remains, 'the stuffed skin of a champion racehorse named Phar Lap' was the most popular exhibit in Melbourne's museum.[70]

Racing was a natural fit with four-in-hand driving and speed more generally. This mentality encouraged racing on the road and permeated employees and passengers alike, along with gambling, which Richard Waterhouse thought was 'inextricably linked' with colonial sporting occasions enjoyed by gentlemen owners and 'plebeian spectators' alike.[71] No amount of legislation could deter racing on the road; there was a mindset about winning, which probably accounted for some of the less wise business decisions. It was also a win/lose approach, which perhaps explained the commercial fights to the death between competitors.

If horsing for stage-coach enterprises initially provided an impetus for the development of horse breeding in the island, eventually it became one way towards establishing a colonial horse industry and community; but from an entrepreneur's emotional and motivational perspective, perhaps the particular esteem of horses was that they exhibited 'the great strengths of character that we also seek in ourselves'.[72] Such high regard may have influenced the determined ways in which individual entrepreneurs went about achieving their personal ends.

Inns

The practical challenge for the entrepreneurs was how to manage the provision and distribution of ready teams of horses at each of the stages along the route. For the mail contract holder, that arrangement also had to cater for the exchange of the mail

---

[70] Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance shaped Australia's History*, p. 122.
[71] Richard Waterhouse, *Private Pleasures, Public Leisure: A History of Australian Popular Culture since 1788* (Melbourne, 1995), p. 19.
[72] Kennedy, *Hauling the Loads: A History of Australia's Working Horses and Bullocks*, p. 186.

where time penalties demanded efficiency. Specifically, stoppages should occupy a minimum amount of time. This aim was constrained by dis/embarking passengers, and by the passengers' need for food and conveniences. En route inns were used in England and that means was adopted in the colony. However, business arrangements varied: the inn might be part of the enterprise; or involved through a subcontracting or consortium agreement; the horses might be subject to separate arrangements; provision of pasture, stabling, fodder and groomage were other considerations, as was the commercial interest of the innkeeper, who might be more inclined for passenger customers to linger than to ensure the minimum time stoppage required by the entrepreneur.

Support at the staging points involved several areas of management: the business arrangement on the road (finance and legal), provision for passengers (hospitality), horse logistics, and the technical horsing of the operation. Handling of the mail was additional. Together, these functions dictated the form of the inn, which normally would require: accommodation for travellers, kitchen, dining rooms, laundry, drink (brewery), and possibly vegetable gardens and dairy; paddocks, fodder and bedding – including transport and storage; stabling for about 10 horses, harness room, specialist tools and accessories, available smithy, and collocated accommodation for the specialist workforce; and the mail and parcels required a strongroom if held on site. Termini needed coach cleaning and maintenance facilities, and en route inns the capability to effect temporary repairs.

At some staging posts, horses were changed without anyone dismounting; sandwiches and brandy might be handed to the passengers, and stoppages of as little as three minutes were achieved. However, at his scheduled meal stop at Page's *Oatlands Hotel,* in 1851, 'Venison' enjoyed 'a dinner of roast goose and rhubarb pie served on green woollen table mats, and with old fashioned spoons and cutlery that would make you fancy yourself at some country inn in England in 1783';[73] but note that this comfortable stop involved Page's enterprise using Page's inn.

John Olive's *Victoria Coach* from Oatlands to Hobart Town advertised a twenty-minute stop for 'Breakfast-an excellent one being always provided'.[74] In England, breakfast might consist of pigeon-pie, ham, cold boiled beef, kidneys, steak,

[73] THE LATE MR. PAGE, in *The Mercury*, 21 May 1878, p. 2.
[74] Victoria Coach, in *Colonial Times*, 15 July 1845, p. 1.

bacon and eggs, buttered toast and muffins, coffee and tea;[75] but although twenty minutes was normal, innkeepers might encourage an earlier departure of the coach,[76] as the food, paid for but not consumed, was made available to the inn's employees.[77] Although some elements of a colonial breakfast menu would have been determined by the local availability of produce, John Olive's advertisement showed a clear intent to attract passengers by providing a superior customer service, and Prinsep's earlier enjoyment of tea and buttered toast at Mrs Cox's *Macquarie Hotel* showed how travellers' expectations were met or exceeded.

Overnight security was a concern. Nehemiah Zwartback spent a near-sleepless night during which he fancied his 'bed-room door was more than once gently attempted'.[78] However that was in the early period, and mine host was the notorious George Dudfield. Nevertheless, at least Zwartback seemed not to be sharing a room. The quality of accommodation was also variable. For instance, the *Launceston Examiner* considered accommodation at the *Corners* was 'far from what it should be', and reported that consequently passengers were overnighting at Campbell Town even though that incurred extra time and expense.[79] Of course, there might have been some partiality or vested interest on the part of the newspaper. Innkeepers as well as stage-coach entrepreneurs were in competition: the licensee of the *Bald Face Stag* offered free transport to the *Corners* to induce travellers to overnight at his inn.[80]

Some innkeepers ran their own branch coaches associated with the inn. Benjamin Hyrons' service to George Town was one example, but *Morrison's Conveyance* from Evandale to Launceston was an enduring example. John Mills's coach enterprise initially operated from Morrison's *Prince of Wales*,[81] but Morrison

---

[75] Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (Harmondsworth, 1971), p. 69.
[76] eg 'Stage Coach Passengers at Breakfast', in Selway, *The Regency Road: The Coaching Prints of James Pollard*, facing p. 62.
[77] Frederick Wilkinson, *Royal Mail Coaches: an illustrated history* (Stroud, 2007), p. 166.
[78] Letter to the editor, Nehemiah Zwartback, in *Colonial Times*, 21 November 1837, p. 6.
[79] NOTES ON THE EAST COAST. S No.1. (By our own Reporter.) in *Launceston Examiner*, 27 April 1876, p. 2.
[80] FREE CONVEYANCE TO FINGAL, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 31 August 1859, p. 8.
[81] *Launceston Examiner*, 5 November 1845, p. 2.

bought it out[82] and operated it until his death, after which his wife continued until she sold the coach enterprise.[83] William Dodery at the *Blenheim Hotel*, Longford, was another enduring example of an innkeeper who sometimes operated stage-coaches.[84] These medium enterprises selectively combined inn-keeping with coach operations, and were successful, or at least remained solvent, by limiting their scope and minimising risk in difficult economic times. Dodery was always free, but John Morrison was probably transported for stealing in a house.[85] Nevertheless, both had wives who were active in the business.

The character of persons appointed to receive and manage the mail en route was an issue in the convict colony. Only shopkeepers, innkeepers and the masters of government schools were reported by the VDL PMG to the British government as forming a suitable class of persons for appointment as postmasters.[86] If an innkeeper were also postmaster, the inn incorporated a secure mail and parcel storage and handling facility. If not, desirably, the inn and post office were collocated. Horses would usually be changed at those stages, so a safe and secure procedure for fulfilling all the requirements in the one location was necessary. However, some mail was exchanged in passing without any halt.

Good ostlers were therefore vital to the swift, efficient and safe exchange of suitable teams of horses at each stage. The coach's post-horn had a range of signals to announce various phases during the processing of the coach, one being a half-mile warning for the ostler to bring out the next team before the coach's arrival.[87] The sweating horses being taken out fell under the ostler's duty of care, and control of the team being placed into the coach was a legal requirement when the driver quit the box. Passengers, guard, mail, luggage, refreshments, spectators, and roving dogs

---

[82] *Launceston Advertiser*, 11 June 1846, p. 2.
[83] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 6 October 1852, p. 644.
[84] Ibid., 6 November 1852, p. 736.
[85] Founders and Survivors, 'John Morrison', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31290512.
[86] F.C. Smith, Edward James, B. Richard Smith, 'Report: the Post Office in Van Diemen's Land', in *POST 44/20*, British Post Office Archive (1846), pp. 28-29.
[87] Six types of standard signal were used, in addition to post horn music for passengers' entertainment. Walker, site visit, Bath Post Office Museum (UK), 18 Sep 2014.

compounded the unsafe environment around the sensitive horses, yet speed was of the essence.[88]

Whether the property of the stage-coach entrepreneur, or the innkeeper, the horse was 'the noblest of quadrupeds, whether … in his strength, his sagacity, or his beauty. He is also the most useful to man of all the animal creation; but his delicacy is equal to his power and his usefulness'.[89] The ostler therefore had a management responsibility for the condition of the teams and their harness. The amount and mix of feed was dependent upon the workload, and fast coach horses were the biggest consumers of the best feed. William Brown prompted public outrage that his horses were 'almost starved to death, sometimes going whole days without a mouthful to eat'.[90] Together with good water, the horses needed a regular diet served four times daily. Rub-down, brushing, care of fetlocks and hoofs, and removal of gravel could take up to two hours per horse, and required a workforce with a range of specialist skills, tools and accessories.[91]

There was also a capital requirement for infrastructure at each of the staging inns. Stables with roomy dust- and draught-free stalls and a broad passage; hay-loft, hoist and racks; a suitable sloping pavement to ensure drainage; ventilation to disperse ammonic gases but maintaining a temperature of between 50-60° F; and with a separate harness room and coach house, were necessary. Sleeping quarters above the stables were needed as staff 'should be at hand' in case of accidents.[92] Recall also Page's complaint that his convict ostlers were reluctant to turn out at night. His up and down mail-coaches crossed in Oatlands between one and two o'clock in the morning; the stage facility required a twenty-four hour, lit capability.

Therefore, each staging service provider, regardless of the business relationship, incurred a considerable investment in infrastructure, specialist tools and equipment, and staff. At the termini, there were further requirements: a principal booking office and accounting centre was usually located in a terminal inn, and the

---

[88] 'Changing Horses to the Mail Coach' and 'Arrival of the Stage Coach', in Selway, *The Regency Road: The Coaching Prints of James Pollard*, facing p. 50 and facing p. 55.
[89] Beeton's, *All About Everything* (Melbourne, Eighth ed.), p. 304.
[90] THE MAIL CONTRACT, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 5 July 1862, p. 4.
[91] Beeton's, *All About Everything*, pp. 144-46 and pp. 54-55.
[92] Ibid., p. 306.

end of the route was where cleaning and maintenance of the coaches took place. The coach was a vehicle requiring mechanical attention, as well as 'a valuable piece of furniture … with delicate upholstery', all subject to harsh treatment on muddy roads.[93] In colonial practice these services were contracted to the coach-makers, but as with the English case, that required the coaches to be moved between the terminal inn and the coach-builder's yard at the end and start of each journey, which could be made easier if each was in close proximity with the terminal stables.

The *Ship Inn* in Collins Street Hobart Town was long the southern terminus for the main road, but has been demolished. In Cameron Street Launceston, Fawkner, then the Coxes and subsequently Page used the *Cornwall Hotel,* some of which remains, but in much altered form. In Oatlands, the Coxes' *York and Albany*, and Page's *Oatlands Hotel* have been demolished, as has the *Half-way House* at the southern end of the Salt Pan Plains. The most significant stage-coach inns of the main road have therefore been lost. In New Norfolk, Mrs Bridger's *Bush Inn* remains and probably can claim to be the island's most significant remaining coaching inn by virtue of age and association.

The *Bald Face Stag* at Cleveland, associated with Mrs Cox's Royal Mail stud, still has its stable block, and is one of the most intact stage-coach inns, along with the later *Victoria* at Tunbridge and *Foxhunters' Return* at Campbell Town. *Ellis's Hotel* in Kempton is undoubtedly the largest and grandest extant inn. The *Tasmanian Inn* in Pontville has lost its stables, but is significant for its simultaneous association with four stage-coach enterprises, and William Dodery's *Blenheim Hotel* in Longford still operates as an inn, offering access not available in many of the others.

Heritage Tasmania's listing of places does not adequately cater for the hierarchy and significance of coaching inns, nor is the heritage database capable of being searched for inns by category. Understanding of the colonial stage-coach industry, its entrepreneurs and infrastructure is poor, creating missed opportunities and placing the surviving built environment further at risk.

[93] Ibid., p. 52.

Costs and Cost

In his London School of Economics thesis, Brian Austen, echoing others, remarked that 'writing on coaching has sought a popular audience, and has signally failed to satisfy the historian of economic growth and social development'.[94] Yet, still no such work has been produced. Perhaps lack of standardised data, and the degree of analytical difficulty within the complexity of the inter-related business arrangements discouraged or defeated researchers; but some attempt must be made to quantify the balance of accounts and place it into context.

To summarise, firstly without quantification, costs associated with stage-coach enterprises could be incurred as follows:

> Capital investment, in buildings (inns, post offices, stables, stud premises, breweries), vehicles (coaches, and mail and logistic carts), horses and harness, specialist tools and equipment, and hospitality industry fixtures, fittings, and equipment;
>
> Workforce, including wages, board and lodging, recruitment and training, livery, and perhaps some benefits (medical or retirement);
>
> Operating costs, especially fodder and bedding, but also vehicle cleaning, repair and maintenance, consumables such as food and drink and heating and lighting, and the provision of hospitality services (eg laundry and cleaning);
>
> Finance and administration, including schedules, bookings, accounting, bonds on contracts, licences, taxes, tolls, advertising, printing, insurance, interest on borrowings, fines on non-performance, and legal liabilities;
>
> Specialists' expenses, such as stud fees, and veterinarians', doctors' and legal charges (and, in the Red Rocks case, an undertaker);
>
> Internal risk losses, such as (employee or sub-contractor) theft of business property, fraud, drivers and guards collecting fares without entry onto the way-bill, and the unauthorised carriage of parcels and other goods;
>
> Contingency losses, through accident to operating equipment, seasonal variations, loss of (uninsured) goods in transit or storage, or from shocks and

---

[94] Brian Austen, *British mail-coach services, 1784-1850* (New York, 1986), p. 344.

discontinuities such as caused by the colonial economy, or the insolvency of a partner or sub-contractor; and

Contractual or regulatory lost business opportunities, such as the free carriage of newspapers and PMG staff, or the prohibition of outside passengers at the rear of the coach.

Such a range of variable factors complicated any quantification of business costs, making any likely assessment simplistic; but some parallels can be found.

From a case study perspective, the road from Bristol to London at 122 miles was comparable to that from Hobart Town to Launceston, with stages at ten to twelve miles and an enterprise using five coaches.[95] The sale of Mrs Cox's enterprise involved seven coaches (probably five, four-horse mail-coaches and two, two-horse mail carts), 150 horses (the 120 normally required for the coaches and 30 being developed, probably through the carts, or for additional haulage on steep gradients or boggy roads) and twenty-four sets of four-horse harness (two teams simultaneously on changeover at each of twelve stages).[96]

Figures for English stage-coach enterprises separated coach and horsing provision from the rest of the business accounts, but planning considerations for the 1830s suggested a price of £30 for a horse, with a life in service of four years, and fodder and shoeing costs at approximately £1 per horse per week.[97] In his evidence to the commissioners, Finch Vidler put the cost of a mail-coach at £145 and charged £2200 pa for the collection, cleaning, maintenance and delivery of the (approximately 260) mail coaches.[98] Joseph Wright estimated a coach's life in service at five years and the cost of a stage-coach at about £20 more than for a mail-coach.[99]

Therefore, Mrs Cox's 1840s VDL operating costs might be estimated in 1830s British pounds as follows:

---

[95] Ibid., Table 61, p. 293.
[96] TO BE DISPOSED OF, MRS. COX'S ESTABLISHMENT ON THE ROAD, in *Launceston Examiner*, 11 April 1849, p. 6.
[97] Austen, *British mail-coach services, 1784-1850*, p. 292.
[98] Appendix 17, Evidence of Mr. Finch Vidler, 4 April 1835, in House of Commons, 'Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the Post Office Department', in *Cockton 1835 (313) XLVIII.399 mf 38.380-81* (1835), pp. 68-69.
[99] Appendix 11, Evidence of Mr. Joseph Wright, 20 December 1827, in ibid., p. 51.

Five stage-coaches @ £165 (£825), plus two mail carts @ £130 (£260) = a capital investment of £1085 ÷ five-year life of type = £217 pa.

150 horses @ £30 each = £4500 capital investment ÷ four-year life in service = £1125 pa.

Feed and shoeing for 150 horses @ £1 per week = £7800 pa.

Maintenance @ £2200 per 260 = £8.46 each x seven vehicles = £59 pa.

Therefore annual operating costs amounted to £9201 of which 85 per cent went to feed and shoeing. At 15 shillings per week (£5850 pa) fodder alone consumed 64 per cent of the operating budget, horse investment accounted for 12 per cent, but vehicles and maintenance amounted to less than three per cent.

These figures accord with Samuel Page's accounts given to the Board of Inquiry. Before the 1853 inflation spike, his fodder costs had been 12 shillings per week; his feed and shoeing equivalent for contracted support at 22 shillings per week would have amounted to £8580; and the pre-spike bill for hay (ie not including oats) at £6 per ton (£2160 pa) would have risen to £5760 pa at £16 per ton.[100] The planning figures therefore have utility in the steady state condition. Also, by 1847, the early inflationary and deflationary fluctuations and the difficulties regarding legal tender and its value in the colony, had been overcome,[101] meaning an 1830s British/1840s VDL exchange rate at parity could be assumed as a start point for the figures, but subject to later economic effects.

Within a stage-coach company's non-operating budget, Austen calculated that administration accounted for between 10 and 20 per cent, and coachmen's wages, seven to nine per cent.[102] Nimrod put a coachman's wage at about a pound a week, but acknowledged some might earn up to £200 pa.[103] Benjamin Hyrons paid

---

[100] Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Mail Contract, dated 10 October 1853, in Colonial Secretary's Office, CSO 24/1/227/8710, (Hobart, Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office, 1853), pp. 270-71.
[101] R.M. Hartwell, *The economic development of Van Diemen's Land : 1820-1850* (Carlton, Vic., 1954). passim, pp. 249-50.
[102] Austen, *British mail-coach services, 1784-1850*, pp. 291-92.
[103] Malet and Nimrod, *Annals of the road : or, notes on mail and stage coaching in Great Britain*, pp. 358-59.

coachman David Solomon £100 pa.[104] The English case might have involved the coachman receiving fares for the first stage, and tipping, whereas the VDL example involved a medium enterprise, where Solomon perhaps had some management responsibilities. The comparison is therefore moot, but £75 pa might be a suitable compromise and assuming one driver for each of the seven vehicles, Mrs Cox's coachman bill would have been £525 pa.

Tolls were another impost upon the business. Under the *Main Road Act (1846)* up to ten toll-gates could be established between Hobart Town and Launceston, each with a charge of one shilling upon a four-horse coach.[105] In 1848, *The Courier* reported Mrs. Cox paid '£501 16s. per annum for crossing one ferry and passing one toll-bar!' (in fact, this was an annualised projection, not an actual figure).[106] The following year, when the Bridgewater Bridge was opened it was at the 'reduced' toll of three shillings.[107] Nevertheless, in 1849 two road tolls and the bridge would have incurred an annual bill of £182. License fees for drivers (five shillings)[108] and stage-coaches (£1)[109] were another small impost, but carried fines of £10 and £50 respectively for non-compliance, and therefore increased the company's unplanned financial risk. However, British charges were almost ten times the VDL licensing rates, and an additional mileage tax was imposed. Also, turnpike tolls amounted to

---

[104] POLICE SUMMARY. Important Case. Fraudulent Insolvent, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 1 December 1849, pp. 1051-52.
[105] His Excellency Sir John Eardley Eardley-Wilmot Baronet Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the Advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for the better Regulation and Maintenance of the Main Road from the City of Hobart Town to Launceston.', in *10 Victoria No 12 (1846)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart Town, 1846), Schedule 1.
[106] *The Courier*, 1 November 1848, p. 3.
[107] Bridgewater Commissioners' Office, Wm.P. Kay, Wm. Sorell, E.J. Manley, 24 April 1849, *The Hobart Town Gazette*, pp. 242-3.
[108] His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly in Parliament., 'An Act to amend the Act for the Regulation of Stage Coaches. [4 October, 1860]', in *24 Victoria No 25 (1860)*, The Government of Tasmania (Hobart, 1860), Sections 2 and 1.
[109] His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly in Parliament., 'An Act to consolidate and amend the Laws relating to the Police Government of Municipalities and Municipal Districts, and for other Purposes relating thereto. [29 September 1865]', in *29 Victoria No 10 (1865)*, The Government of Tasmania (Hobart, 1865), Sections 40 and 38.

about 25 per cent of the administration budget,[110] so the colonial enterprises faced much lower overheads from duties and charges.

These differences make extrapolation of the actual British administration amount difficult, but their values indicate that it was considerable. Therefore, a colonial enterprise's known, non-operating budget, including £330 pa for stud fees, amounted to £1047, to which must be added the unknown, but significant 10 to 20 per cent value of a British non-operating budget. Assuming coachmen's wages (£525) were 10 per cent, the 20 per cent figure was a minimum of £1050, and therefore a 120-mile, VDL, fast stage-coach enterprise would have needed a combined operating/non-operating budget of at least £11,298 pa not including provision for contingencies. Samuel Page put his gross costs at upwards of £12,000 pa, which would therefore seem to be a valid cost estimate.[111]

A vertical monopoly of horsing and fodder would have improved certainty of supply, and reduced some of the capital investment in stock, but still required an investment in land, infrastructure and specialists, and therefore remained a legitimate cost on the business. However, feed was the biggest variable. Fast coach horses required four meals a day; slower coaches, in smaller enterprises could reduce the fodder budget by 25 per cent by serving only three meals.

Page's £12,000 pa figure for a 120-mile route equated to £100 pa per mile. Deducting the revenue from the mail contract (£1400) left a balance of £10,600 or a break-even figure of just over £29 per day (but that was every day) across two (up and down) coaches. Normal inside/outside configurations totalled nine through to seventeen passengers (although the *Leviathan* could provide excess capacity) with a mix of fares. Load factor was seasonal, sometimes coaches ran empty, and price wars could drive fares below cost, usually in the summer season, which would otherwise have provided the opportunity to recoup losses incurred over winter.

In June 1844, with no competition, Mrs Cox's fares on the main road were £3 inside and £2 outside,[112] which would have enabled her to break even with three insides and three outsides on <u>every</u> journey (ie a mix-dependent, fifteen-passenger

---

[110] Austen, *British mail-coach services, 1784-1850*, pp. 291-92.
[111] Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Mail Contract, dated 10 October 1853, in Office, CSO 24/1/227/8710, p. 271.
[112] *Colonial Times*, 19 June 1844, p. 1.

coach load factor of 33⅓ per cent) if she had run every day. Her decision not to run on Sundays therefore incurred an annual cost of £1508, which she had to make up during the remainder of every week. When competition arose, Page offered fares as low as five shillings outside and fifteen in (ie a required fifteen-passenger coach load factor of 215 per cent).[113] Therefore even if the coach was full, Page stood to make a loss of £8 15s on every journey. Thus 'Venison's' claim that Page had 'sunk £10,000 in running one Hyrons off the road',[114] was a loss Page would have sustained in just over one and a half years even if every coach ran full.

In Britain, David Mountfield observed: 'Coaching was a business with high costs, high risks and slim profit margins. No one made a fortune in it, not even the great London proprietors, whose wealth came chiefly from other interests'.[115] Clearly, for a purely stage-coach enterprise a monopoly on the route provided the best means to control prices. A vertical monopoly on supply cushioned the business against contingencies and counter-monopoly tactics, but during difficulties, other parts of a broader business venture had to subsidise the shortfalls, or the venture would fail.

Value

Against the business costs, broader benefits should be considered. Stage-coach enterprises were an input to the colony's communications network. In 1844, the 17 contracts for the carriage of inland mails cost the government £2,771 15s 7d;[116] applying the Post Office Department's declared distances, these contracts covered approximately 677 miles.[117] GPO receipts were already exceeding costs, so the colony derived value, and indeed made a profit, by contracting to the enterprises. Furthermore, five newspapers published in Hobart Town and three published in Launceston were carried inland, twice weekly (one newspaper, once-weekly) by the

[113] CHEAP, SPEEDY, AND SAFE TRAVELLING, in *Launceston Examiner*, 21 September 1850, p. 9.
[114] THE LATE MR. PAGE, in *The Mercury*, 21 May 1878, p. 2.
[115] David Mountfield, *Stage and Mail Coaches* (Oxford, 2003), p. 21.
[116] F.C Smith, 'A Statement of the Net Revenue… for the year ended 31 December 1844', in *POST 44/14*, British Post Office Archive (1844).
[117] Polymetrical Table, in GN 246, CSO dated 27 September 1832, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 28 September 1832, pp. 512-13.

contractors at no cost.[118] These collateral benefits for communications and social inclusion were undoubtedly valuable, but difficult to quantify. However, the minimum value to the colony must have been the cost of the contracts.

The development of associated infrastructure was another value to the colonial economy. Although not all inns provided the same level of service, all were used for changing horses. If ten miles comprised a standard stage, then the mail contracted 677 miles would have required 67 inns in 1844. Of course, opposition enterprises would have increased this number, and the whole would have involved a considerable capital investment. If rent were taken as an indication of suitable return on capital, John Davis's £250 pa for the *Tasmanian Inn*,[119] multiplied by 67 would amount to £16,750 of activity in the annual colonial economy. Other infrastructure included horse studs (Samuel Page had three), and the coach-builders' manufactories, for which seven could be assumed, but whose output was not exclusively dedicated to stage-coaches. Nevertheless, a conservative annual figure for infrastructure might be £20,000.

Applying Page's figure of £100 per mile pa to the contracted mail mileage gives a figure of £67,700, and along with the infrastructure figure, a total of £87,700 in annual economic activity directly related to mail-coach services. In 1846, VDL colonial government expenditure was £117,078 14s 7d.[120] Without including the direct input of opposition stage-coaches, or the indirect contribution of inns, economic activity due to mail-coach provision equalled 75 per cent of annual government expenditure at that time.

The question of proportionality applied to employment within the coach manufactories, but 40 employees per business would have amounted to 280, of whom half (140) might be counted (stage-coach construction required all the trades, including upholsterers and fine painters). Assuming two coachmen for each of the 17 mail-coach enterprises and an additional five for the main road, required 39 employees. Similarly, 19 administration staff (although they might have been multi-

---

[118] General Post Office, 'A Return… of each Newspaper Publication passing free by post… dated 29 December 1845', in *POST 44/10*, British Post Office Archive (Hobart Town, Van Diemen's Land, 1845).
[119] SUPREME COURT-FRIDAY. CIVIL SITTINGS, in *The Hobarton Mercury*, 3 November 1856, p. 3.
[120] FINANCE MINUTE, Council Chamber, 17 March 1848, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 21 March 1848, p. 285.

tasked family members) might have been employed. The 67 stages were likely also post-offices each requiring a post-master, and if guards equalled coachmen, related Post Office employees would have numbered 89. A minimum annual employment figure for mail-coach operations and administration, and mail- and stage-coach construction might therefore have been 287.

Austen cited William Chaplin as having 2,000 employees, including 'ostlers, book-keepers and servants' for his enterprise of 1800 horses.[121] Therefore, comprising ostlers, grooms and stable-hands, a ratio of around one employee to one horse is reasonable, and at one horse per mile, would have required 677 employees, or ten at each stage. Thus, a simplistic, but very conservative figure of around 1000 people was directly involved in the delivery of mail-coach services in VDL in 1844, when the total population of the island was about 70,000; 1000 employees constituted 3.4 per cent of males aged 14-60 excluding convicts engaged in public works.[122]

If fourteen employees were assumed for each of the 67 inns, 938 employees would have been required, albeit only proportionally involved in serving mail-coach customers. Including women aged 14-60 in the total, nearly 4.5 per cent of the working-age population (although children would have been used for some tasks) was directly or closely associated with mail-coach enterprises and their supporting hospitality services. This figure does not include opposition stage-coach enterprises or their service support.

The entry of Hyrons' *Comet* onto the road would have introduced another £12,000 of economic activity, five stage-coaches, eight operations and administrative staff, 120 horses with 120 ostlers/grooms, and 12 inns with 168 staff, to put the proportion of stage-coach related employees above five per cent of the colony's working-age population. Other stage-coach enterprises without mail contracts operated from New Norfolk, Norfolk Plains, Richmond, Evandale and Westbury. Therefore, the economic and employment analytical framework provides a very conservative estimate. Assuming 225 miles of non-mail, stage-coach services, all estimates could be increased by one third.

---

[121] Austen, *British mail-coach services, 1784-1850*, p. 276.
[122] VAN DIEMEN'S LAND CENSUS OF THE YEAR 1848, in *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 21 March 1848, following p. 295.

Therefore, with a notional mail and stage-coach combined mileage of 902, and an operating requirement of one coach per twenty-five miles, 36 stage-coaches were required, or more than seven new vehicles per annum. However, this was a subsidiary element of the coach-building industry, as in addition to other vehicles required by the colony's economy, in 1846 'carriages and carts' to the value of £4008 were exported to other British colonies.[123]

In the 1840s, the island would have had to produce at least 225 coach horses per year, with over 900 in service out of a horse population, which Cockburn put at 15,000 by 1853.[124] In 1846, VDL exported horses to the value of £16,858.[125] Samuel Page junior made six voyages to New Zealand in the 1860s to export horses.[126] In the 1870s, Tasmania was a source for army remounts in India,[127] and Sydney Page later became a government agent for the procurement of horses for the contingent to South Africa.[128] Stage-coach entrepreneurs were inextricably linked with the colony's breeding of quality horses for domestic use as well as for export; but again, quantification and apportionment of the value of that contribution to the broader economy is complex.

Similar difficulties challenge any apportionment of the agricultural effort required to grow and transport, fodder and hay for the stage-coach enterprises. The 900 horses in the 1840s would have required around 3600 tons, costing between £21,600 and £57,600 pa depending on circumstances. The latter was the equivalent of half of colonial government expenditure for 1846, and more than half the value of the island's oats and wheat exports that year.[129] Whether grown by the entrepreneurs, bought from suppliers, delivered internally or by contracted carters, it represented a

---

[123] IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF VAN DIEMEN'S LAND, DURING 1846, in Wood, *Van Diemen's Land Royal Kalendar, colonial register, and almanack*, p. 212.
[124] F.J. Cockburn, Letters from the southern hemisphere, (Calcutta?1856), http://nla.gov.au/nla.aus-f8407, pp. 112-13.
[125] IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF VAN DIEMEN'S LAND, DURING 1846, in Wood, *Van Diemen's Land Royal Kalendar, colonial register, and almanack*, p. 213.
[126] OBITUARY, in *The Examiner*, 21 June 1927, p. 4.
[127] No. 560. GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, MILITARY DEPARTMENT, in *Launceston Examiner*, 23 February 1875, p. 4.
[128] *The Mercury*, 14 March 1900, p. 2 and 19 March 1900, p. 3.
[129] IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF VAN DIEMEN'S LAND, DURING 1846, in Wood, *Van Diemen's Land Royal Kalendar, colonial register, and almanack*, p. 213.

significant product and service of value within the colonial economy, as emphasised by its export to Victoria during the gold-rush.

Acquired skills were another collateral benefit derived from the range of stage-coach associated trades and services, for which it is difficult to assign a specific value; but even more unquantifiable, was the part played by the industry in the rehabilitation of convicts. In recommending his premises and reminding patrons of 'the well known care of "Mine Hostess"', innkeeper George Frost noted that he still continued his profession of horse-breaker.[130] Frost, a tattooed 'traveller', was a single man whose trade was 'groom and coachman', when transported for stealing cloth in 1834.[131] He was quickly assigned and went on to put his horse skills to better use, and become a minor entrepreneur. While the relative merits of the assignment system over the probation system, or whether more serious criminals were transported in the later period, were considerations, the enlarged stage-coach industry nevertheless engaged former convicts as employees and minor entrepreneurs, and aided their rehabilitation into society, often in value-adding family businesses.

Stage-coach enterprises provided a public service, which perhaps accounted for some of the clearly uneconomic, but selfless, transport provided by the major entrepreneurs. Stage-coaches carried: invalids, convicts and government officials under contract; businesses, theatre companies and sporting teams; and inter-colonial and overseas visitors and tourists as part of a coordinated travel industry. Progressively, the enterprises contributed to the development of the colony's social capital, but that contribution was not easily measurable.

Conclusion

Roads and bridges were important enablers of the colonial stage-coach industry, but except for the bridge construction mentioned in chapter 2, were not integrated into the private sector business arrangements and hence were not included in this chapter. Unlike in Britain, commercial turnpike enterprises were not established and road construction and repair remained the responsibility of government, leaving little opportunity for the transport operators to directly affect the

[130] Important to Travellers and Invalids. THE COACH AND HORSES. LEMON SPRINGS, in *The Hobarton Mercury*, 7 December 1855, p. 1.
[131] Founders and Survivors, 'George Frost', http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31140250.

construction of public works and communications infrastructure. Nevertheless, although progressed only slowly, VDL roads were comparatively well developed. In NSW in 1850 for instance, 'there were three goods roads … elsewhere the roads were appalling'.[132]

The business planning costs for colonial mail and stage-coach enterprises could be basically summarised as follows: an operating cost of £100 per mile pa; a requirement for one vehicle per 25 miles of route; one coachman and one guard per vehicle; up to two finance/administrative staff per enterprise; one horse per double mile; one horse-related employee per horse; one staging post/inn per ten miles; approximately 14 hospitality-related employees per inn; four tons of feed and hay per horse pa; and one post-office with postmaster per stage. Overwhelmingly, the preponderant costs of the business were attributed to the horses and their feed. Although the industry was workforce intensive, workers represented a much lesser cost; and the cost of vehicles and maintenance was, by comparison, a very small proportion.

Direct cost comparisons with 1830s British enterprises had utility for the 1840s by taking the exchange rate at parity. Cost comparisons across the VDL/Tasmanian economy were valid for the years 1850 and 1870, and could be factorised between those years to take account of the inflation spike shown at Fig. 6.1. Direct costs for the enterprises were therefore broadly measurable. Indirect costs associated with the enabling, supplying and supporting industries were less easy to attribute as they were subject to a variable proportion of stage-coach related effort.

Beyond the direct and indirect costs, the value of the economic, employment and social benefit derived from the enterprises and their associated businesses was undoubtedly considerable, but often of an intangible nature. However, the economic activity generated by the stage-coach industry and its enablers employed at least five per cent of the island's adult workforce and approximately equalled the colonial government's annual expenditure. Less quantifiably, it delivered a public service that facilitated communication, helped to rehabilitate former convicts, enabled a coordinated travel system for the developing colony, and underpinned the colony's social capital.

---

[132] Richard Waterhouse, *The Vision Splendid: a social and cultural History of rural Australia* (Fremantle, 2005), p. 34.

PART 3 – TRANSITIONS

CHAPTER 8

ADAPTATION TOWARDS MOTORISATION

In 1856, the VDL penal settlement was transformed into the self-governing colony of Tasmania before it became a state in the Commonwealth of Australia. James Boyce believed 'remarkably little changed after 1856 and self-government … Tasmania became stagnant, a living economic and cultural museum of the pre-industrial era';[1] but Lloyd Robson, who perhaps struggled to catalogue the diversity of change during that period, would probably have disagreed.[2] Within the stage-coach and broader travel industries, constantly changing governmental, economic, technological and social factors prompted business responses until the demise of the coach horse.

A review of the data at Appendix A during the period between 1856 and 1876 (the date of the entry into service of the Main Line railway) shows a steady growth of stage-coach enterprises, whose destinations reflected the progressive spread of settlement for agricultural purposes. These services were provided by small enterprises. In Hobart Town, urban omnibuses commenced and developed services; but in Launceston such vehicles were latecomers, and were initially prompted by a need to provide cheaper alternatives to hackney cabs for passengers using the railways. Other than these small expansions, the only other growth during the period was prompted by the discovery of gold in the Fingal region.

From 1877 until the end of horse-drawn coach services (almost fifty years), Appendix A records 236 enterprises out of a total of 525. This figure is somewhat surprising given that the period represents what is regarded as a railway age. The railway had not supplanted the stage-coach; instead, the Appendix shows mining sites being connected by stage-coach, and branch line services connecting remote or by-passed settlements with the rail trunk. These services were supplied by numerous

---

[1] James Boyce, *Van Diemen's Land* (Melbourne, 2008), p. 1.
[2] L.L. Robson, *A History of Tasmania. Volume II, Colony and state from 1856 to the 1980s* (Melbourne, 1991), pp. 3-214.

small enterprises. Where larger enterprises survived was in advance of the railway as it moved into the north-west, after which they reverted to smaller, supporting branch ventures; otherwise, over time, only urban omnibuses offered sufficient scale for a large enterprise, principally of a logistic, rather than an overnight nature.

Changes in the island's economy prompted adaptations in the way passenger transport services were structured and in the scale of the enterprises. The island's new colonial government struggled somewhat to manage or influence the economy and finance supporting public works; indeed, it faced challenges with ends, ways and means. Globally, the introduction of railways changed the nature of the traveller 'from a private individual into one of a mass public – a mere consumer' ie the traveller became a commodity.[3] To what extent would that apply to Tasmania? From Appendix A, stage-coach enterprises persisted for up to 50 years after the introduction of railways; was that an indication of Boyce's lingering, stagnant pre-industrial society, or were the island's circumstances such that the tyranny of distance had to be managed by alternative ways and means?

This chapter will examine the island's evolving social and economic circumstances following self-government to situate the ways and means employed by government and private enterprise to accommodate the changing requirements for public transport. In particular, the chapter will address the nature of the business enterprises and the structures they used as the population increasingly enjoyed private, leisure time.

Legislative Changes

The VDL government had enacted a structured and efficient, three-category approach to the regulation of road transport: viz for carters and carriers, stage-coaches, and hackney cabs. However, its allocation of responsibilities and organisation for the provision and maintenance of roads and bridges was problematic and constantly changing.

The main road had been defined as that 'leading from Hobart Town to Launceston'. Cross roads connected townships, and bye roads led from farms to the (gazetted) main, cross or bye roads. *The Road Act (1840)* dealt at some length with

[3] Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century* (Berkeley, 1986), p. xiv.

governance aspects, which, for the main road, were the responsibility of the Director-General of Roads, and for the lesser roads, were to be managed by elected District Commissioners, who would raise some revenue through the imposition of a rate.[4] However, the necessary road districts were not established, and the Act became a 'dead letter';[5] and although the matter was somewhat resolved by the later *Cross and Bye Roads Act (1852)*,[6] the key issues were and would remain: devolution of responsibility and the question of who would pay.

For the historiography and understanding of the stage-coach enterprises, the declaration of a single main road distorted the focus. For the enterprises, devolution of responsibility to many, small, road trusts, each covering a large area, but with low and uncertain budgets simply resulted in poor road development and maintenance. For carters, bad roads meant small loads;[7] but from a stage-coach perspective, bad roads also meant routes not being opened up, schedules which could not be guaranteed, a requirement for more horses, and the need for lighter (eg American designed) vehicles.

Were it not for the legal definition of the main road, the western road from Launceston might be considered as an early main road given its steadily increasing traffic and length. Stage-coach proprietor Daniel O'Donnell (always free) had been obliged to abandon the route to Westbury due to 'the wretched state of the roads', and although he transferred to Evandale,[8] he subsequently became insolvent.[9] His successor on the Westbury road, William Motton (always free) faced the same

---

[4] His Excellency Sir John Franklin Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for the making altering improving and defining the Main and other Roads of this Island.', in *4 Victoria No 35 (1840)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart Town, 1840), Sections 2-3, 5-6, 28 and 49-50.

[5] Grant Rootes, *A Chaotic State of Affairs?: the permissive system of local government in rural Tasmania 1840-1907* (University of Tasmania, PhD thesis, 2008), p. 35 and p. 56.

[6] His Excellency Sir William Thomas Denison Knight Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the Advice of the Legislative Council., 'An Act for constructing regulating and maintaining certain Cross and Bye Roads in the Island of Van Diemen's Land.', in *15 Victoria No 8 (1852)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart Town, 1852).

[7] Note 2, Mercury 12 February 1890, in Rootes, *A Chaotic State of Affairs?: the permissive system of local government in rural Tasmania 1840-1907*, p. 178.

[8] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 6 May 1846, p. 348, and 9 May 1846, p. 359.

[9] *Launceston Examiner*, 29 September 1849, p. 6.

'impassible' road conditions, but spent time 'filling up the immense holes' so that he could commence operations.[10] In the south, Laurence Cotham, proprietor of the Richmond coach, had likewise resorted to repairing the road, incurring costs of about £50;[11] whereas Joseph Fisher adopted a different approach and became a member of the local road sub-committee.[12]

The entrepreneurs therefore had to be prepared to take direct action on the cross and bye roads to improve their likelihood of business success. Subsequently, even though the *Main Road Act (1880)* declared over 700 miles as main road, government initially retained only the Hobart to Launceston road and devolved responsibility for the remainder, and for the maintenance of 4159 miles of cross and bye roads, to 73 road trusts.[13] Although local boards refused to accept the main roads' costs, the overall arrangement clearly lacked structural simplicity, and unity for planning, financial and organisational purposes. Transport operators suffered the consequences.

The government also adopted a policy of devolution towards the licensing of vehicles. The *Hawkers and Carriers Act (1835)* had required licences for carters operating outside Hobart Town and Launceston, but did not apply to mail carts or stage-coaches.[14] By 1853, 58 licensed carriers were gazetted, one of whom, Roddam H. Douglas (always free) of Westbury, like William Cutts, progressed into the stage-coach business via carrying.[15]

Government repealed the existing hackney cabs legislation and issued an amending Act. Some of the amendments were refinements to the administrative arrangements, but henceforward, drivers, and not just their vehicles, were to be

---

[10] Ibid., 23 September 1848, p. 7.
[11] RICHMOND QUARTER SESSIONS, in *Colonial Times*, 25 April 1851, p. 3.
[12] *The Courier*, 8 February 1856, p. 3.
[13] Rootes, *A Chaotic State of Affairs?: the permissive system of local government in rural Tasmania 1840-1907*, pp. 199-209.
[14] His Excellency Colonel George Arthur Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act to provide for the Licensing of Hawkers and Carriers.', in *6 William IV No 7 (1835)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart Town, 1835), Section 2.
[15] Police Department, Hobart Town, 1 July 1853, *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 5 July 1853, pp. 554-5.

licensed.[16] William Spearman was a Launceston cab operator and livery stable owner who used that foundation to enter stage-coaching and pursue a monopoly on the western road to Deloraine.[17]

However, it was not until 1860 that drivers of stage-coaches were required to be licensed.[18] When the administration for enforcement of licensing under a number of Acts was consolidated under the *Police Act (1865),* the responsibility was devolved to the 'District or Municipality' level, but sums received for the licences were to be paid into general revenue.[19] However, stage-coach and drivers' licence fees were soon allocated to the licensing municipalities.[20]

The Hobart City Council (HCC) required its annual inspection for and renewal of all licences to be completed by the end of each calendar year.[21] Petrow and Alexander put the council's total municipal licence responsibility at between 1600 and 1700, but did not break that figure down other than to indicate that it did include

---

[16] His Excellency Sir William Thomas Denison Knight Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the Advice of the Legislative Council., 'An Act to repeal the Act of Council of this Island intituled An Act for the Regulation of Vehicles conveying Passengers for Hire within the Towns of this Island and to substitute other Provisions in lieu thereof.', in *12 Victoria No 6 (1848)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart Town, 1848), Section 5.
[17] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 13 June 1855, p. 8.
[18] His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly in Parliament., 'An Act to amend the Act for the Regulation of Stage Coaches. [4 October, 1860]', in *24 Victoria No 25 (1860)*, The Government of Tasmania (Hobart, 1860), Section 1.
[19] His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly in Parliament., 'An Act to consolidate and amend the Laws relating to the Police Government of Municipalities and Municipal Districts, and for other Purposes relating thereto. [29 September 1865]', in *29 Victoria No 10 (1865)*, The Government of Tasmania (Hobart, 1865), Sections 40 and 60.
[20] His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly in Parliament., 'An Act to amend The Police Act, 1865. [11 October 1867]', in *31 Victoria No 18 (1867)*, The Government of Tasmania (Hobart, 1867), Section 3.
[21] CITY OF HOBART ANNUAL LICENSES, in *The Mercury*, 21 December 1881, p. 3.

stage-coaches (but with no mention of drivers).[22] Launceston adopted a similar annual inspection approach.[23]

As shown in the case of John T. Cooley (Chapter 3), the allocation of licensing revenue was contentious, as fees were collected in one municipality but vehicles often operated through several, causing wear on roads and bridges, towards whose upkeep they made no contribution unless local tolls were imposed. Of course, toll-gates were universally disliked and imaginatively circumvented, physically and procedurally.[24] As a consequence, their costs consumed a large proportion of the revenue they raised.

Another example of VDL legislation affecting the enterprises was the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (1837)* which referred to an English Act (5&6, W4, S59) and proscribed the harming of animals through wanton torture, cruel beating, mistreatment or abuse, or by negligence or ill-usage in the driving of any such animal.[25] Although the usual counter-argument regarding the mistreatment of carriage and coach horses was that they were too valuable an investment to endanger, there were instances of public concern. Writing from Ross in 1853, 'HUMANITY' complained of the 'brutal treatment' suffered by underfed horses, which were 'unmercifully overloaded and driven'.[26] Stage-coaches were galloped from the north into Ross, and often struggled to cross the Salt Pan Plains from the south. 1853 was the year Samuel Page complained of a lack of available fodder, but James Lord was also running, so either, or both, enterprises might have been intended.

Civil society was increasingly alert to perceived injustices. The Launceston branch of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) reported the poor condition of a team harnessed to a local mail-coach;[27] but 'false and injurious' reports to the press, for competitive rather than humanitarian motives, risked libel

---

[22] Stefan Petrow and Alison Alexander, *Growing with strength: a history of the Hobart City Council 1846-2000* (Hobart, 2008), p. 132.
[23] CITY OF LAUNCESTON… ANNUAL INSPECTION OF LICENSED VEHICLES, in *Launceston Examiner*, 8 December 1896, p. 7.
[24] ROADS AND TOLL-BARS, in ibid., 7 June 1848, pp. 2-3.
[25] His Excellency Sir John Franklin Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An Act for the better prevention of Cruelty to Animals.', in *8 William IV No 3 (1837)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart Town, 1837), Preamble.
[26] letter, HUMANITY, dated Ross 19 July 1853, in *The Courier*, 22 July 1853, p. 3.
[27] CRUELTY TO ANIMALS, in *Launceston Examiner*, 9 June 1880, p. 2.

action.[28] Regarding coach horses, the government's revised Act (1877) particularly proscribed over-driving and over-loading, and for offences committed within a Police District, half of the penalty received was allotted 'to the use of the informer or party prosecuting'.[29] Presumably government thought policing within the municipalities was adequate, but in the remoter districts an incentive was required to empower the watchfulness of the public.

By 1909, the SPCA was inspecting (especially coach-) horses on a daily basis and the Governor presided over the society.[30] However, any accusation of mistreatment of horses was regarded as a personal insult and very harmful to an owner's reputation.

Refinements to Post Office legislation also affected the stage-coach enterprise environment. A new Act, under which postage was calculated according to weight, carriage of newspapers continued to be free, and the use of adhesive postage stamps was introduced, caused a reorganisation of many departmental practices. The Post Office's monopoly over the carriage of letters and packets was reinforced, but exemptions meant there was still scope for some private enterprise delivery.[31] Increasingly, inland mail coach schedules were reactively changed to link with uncertain overseas mail arrivals,[32] and planned departures.[33] These responses demonstrated the relative priority of the southern demand for a timely mail delivery, over the travelling or internal communication needs of the northern population.

The Post Office Department's organisation for the delivery of the inland mails reflected, but did not exactly match, the structure for the main, cross and bye roads.

---

[28] *The Mercury*, 18 September 1902, p. 6.
[29] His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly in Parliament., 'An Act for the more effectual Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. [11 December 1877]', in *41 Victoria No 17 (1877)*, The Government of Tasmania (Hobart, 1877), Sections 2 and 9.
[30] TASMANIAN S.P.C.A. THE ANNUAL MEETING, in *The Mercury*, 17 March 1909, p. 6.
[31] His Excellency Sir William Thomas Denison Knight Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the Advice of the Legislative Council., 'An Act to regulate the Conveyance and Postage of Letters. [31st August, 1853]', in *17 Victoria No 6 (1853)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart Town, 1853), Sections 5, 11, 17 and 42-43.
[32] PAGES' MAIL COACH, in *Launceston Examiner*, 20 June 1863, p. 5.
[33] THE OUTWARD ENGLISH MAIL, in *The Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 14 May 1859, p. 2.

The commencement of the colony's second half-century marked the end of a period of postal development and its entry into a steady state of service delivery; but it was also a transition point into a different business environment. The Post Office had been a, if not the, key driver in the origin and development of the stage-coach industry and especially of the route structure; but each was only ever a part of the other, and technological developments were to affect both.

Technology-driven Change

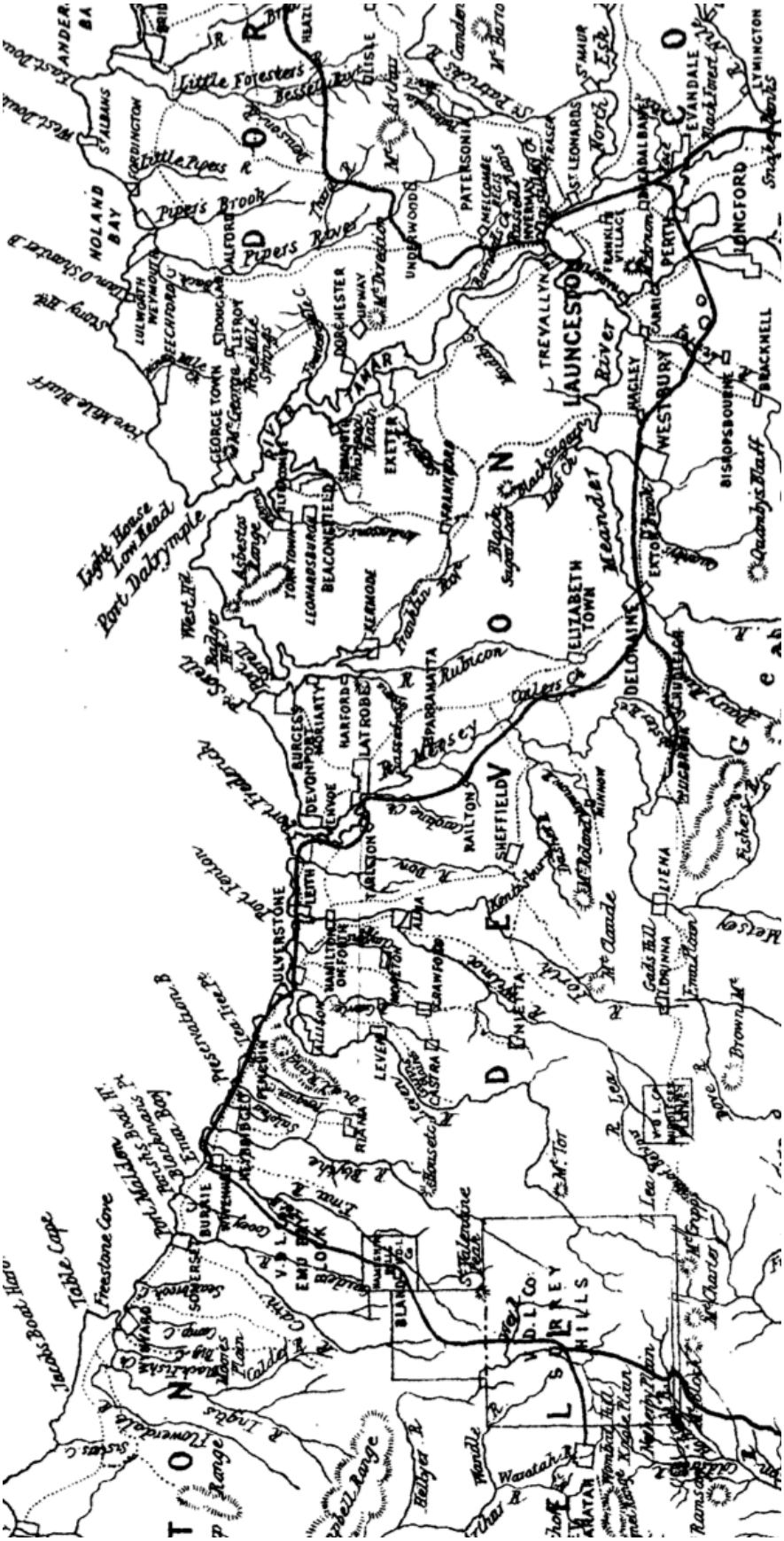
The introduction of the electric telegraph was the first technological development to affect stage-coach enterprises, but only its transmission of inland information directly affected the coaches. Robson inferred that the first telegraph message between Hobart Town and Launceston was sent on 2 August 1853 by the *Mercury*.[34] However, the *Mercury* was not yet in publication at that time, and tenders for the construction of the telegraph were not called until 21 July 1856, with the successful tenderer announced the following month.[35]

Adnum gave 8 July 1857 as the date for the first transmission over the line (which was for the *Mercury*), although business use of the line did not commence officially until 10 August 1857.[36] Charges and regulations for the use of the telegraph were gazetted during that week,[37] and the service was quickly taken up by businesses of all kinds, and especially the newspapers, which received advantageous rates.

The stage-coaches' importance in carrying information, both official and informal, was thus considerably reduced by the speed of the new alternative; and from a business perspective, the prestige and value of the mail contract, which afforded stage-coach enterprises some buffering commercial diversification, were diminished. Furthermore, regional telegraph lines soon followed so that this challenge to the stage-coaches also affected the viability of branch and feeder line operators.

---

[34] Robson, *A History of Tasmania. Volume II, Colony and state from 1856 to the 1980s*, p. 306.
[35] *Launceston Examiner*, 7 August 1856, p. 3 and 27 September 1856, p. 3.
[36] V.B. Adnum, *A History of the Post Office in Tasmania* (Hobart, 1975), p. 41.
[37] GOVERNMENT GAZETTE, 4 August 1857, in *Launceston Examiner*, p. 2.


LAUNCESTON
Tamar River
Meander
Piper's River
Piper's Brook
Little Forester's
Little Pipers R.
HOLAND BAY
ST ALBANS
GEORGE TOWN
Port Dalrymple
Light House Low Head
West Head
Badger Head
Asbestos Range
BEACONSFIELD
EXETER
TAMAR
RIVER
PATERSONIA
UNDERWOOD
DORNEMESTER
LULWORTH
WEYMOUTH
BEECHFORD
DOUGLAS
ST LEONARDS
TREVALLYN
PERTH
LONGFORD
EVANDALE
BLACKNELL
WESTBURY
HAGLEY
BISHOPSBOURNE
ELIZABETH TOWN
DELORAINE
LATROBE
HARFORD
DEVONPORT
BURGESS
RAILTON
SHEFFIELD
KENTISBURY
LILYDALE
LILIENA
GADS HILL
ULVERSTONE
LEITH
HAMILTON
WILMOT
CRADLE MOUNTAIN
Mt Roland
Mt Claude
Mt Tor
Mt Charles
Table Cape
Freestone Cove
Jacobs Boat Haven
Port Sorell
Port Latrobe
Port Frederick
Port Huon
Emu Bay
Burnie
Penguin
Ulverstone
Leven
Forth
Mersey
Rubicon
Franklin
Black Sugar Loaf
Lake Barrington
Lake Rowallan
Lake Mackenzie
Lake Parangana
Lake Vera
Lake Huon
Lake Sorell
Lake Crescent
Lake Tiberias
Lake Augusta
Lake Echo
Lake Meadowbank
Lake Pedder
Lake Gordon
Lake Burbury
Lake Rosebery
Lake Dora
Lake Margaret
Lake Plimsoll
Lake Mackintosh
Lake Rhona
Lake Ada
Lake Tyenna
Lake Fenton
Lake Skinner
Lake Binney
Lake Bisdee

The stage-coach's superiority in overcoming Blainey's distance was being diminished by new technology's ability to reduce the time taken. The next such challenge to the stage-coach came from the establishment of railways, the first of which was the Launceston and Western railway. While the initial purpose of railway development was the all-weather carriage of bulk goods to market and for export,[38] it was the railways' carriage of mail and passengers that threatened the stage-coach enterprises. The saga of the Tasmanian railways is outside the scope of this study; however, railways directly affected stage-coach enterprises in different ways and locations, and over a varied timeframe.

Regional pride and rivalry encouraged railway development, even when the business case was not sound, and just as with stage-coach enterprises, insolvency resulted. The vagaries of the seasons and the economy affected both modes of transport. Indeed, floods in 1870, followed by the severe economic depression of 1870-71,[39] coincided with the opening of the rail line to Deloraine in 1871.[40] The rail company ceased operations the following year and was taken over by the government. Ironically, William Dodery, perhaps the only former stage-coach operator to become involved in a railway concern, chaired the extraordinary meeting of shareholders, which wound up the company in 1900.[41]

Railways were expensive to establish and maintain, might be considered as the successors/supplanters of main road stage-coach enterprises, and would likewise seek monopolies to reduce their commercial risk. Tasmania's small agricultural material and population base made development of branch lines even riskier. Thus, the market would always require a sustainable mix of transport options to extend the trunk and feed the branches, but the rate of change was slow, regionally variable and economically driven. Connecting coach services relied on the private initiative of small enterprises, which were vulnerable to government and railway company power.

---

[38] Brian R. Chamberlain, *The Launceston and Western Railway Company Ltd., 1867-1904* (Launceston, 1985), p. 1.
[39] Robson, *A History of Tasmania. Volume II, Colony and state from 1856 to the 1980s*, p. 57.
[40] Chamberlain, *The Launceston and Western Railway Company Ltd., 1867-1904*, p. 34.
[41] Ibid., p. 66.

However, at first the railways were vulnerable. Even though Blainey considered that in contrast to animal hauled transport 'in the wet season the trains kept on running', on Tasmania's poorly constructed railways that was not necessarily the case.[42] In 1876, main line railway operations were disrupted when flooding on the Salt Pan Plains (*déjà vu*) closed the line, and passengers had to be carried by stage-coach between Ross and Antill Ponds.[43] Fortunately, coaches were still available as a backup. However, as government financially underpinned the railways, the main mail contracts were quickly let to the railways: that to Deloraine at £550 pa, but requiring mail-coach contractor, William Spearman, to carry the mail from Launceston to Hadspen and Carrick, which the railway by-passed.[44]

A similar situation resulted from the main line ('toy railroad'),[45] which by-passed the old main road from Brighton all the way to Antill Ponds; so that despite Stancombe's claim that passengers 'forsook the coaches utterly', several districts and almost half of the main road, were left without a convenient passenger transport service.[46] In 1878 for instance: 'Since the opening of the Main Line, and the withdrawal of Page's coaches the residents of Bothwell have felt themselves … shut out from communication with other parts of the colony.'[47] Stancombe did not consider the further effects of the introduction of the railway on stage-coach enterprises, which in England had adapted to become feeders to the railway trunks; nor was abandonment of stage-coaches the case in NSW where Cobb & Co integrated, and even anticipated, railway route development. The same situation applied in Tasmania.

As the western railway route progressed, stage-coaches provided transport ahead of, and were subsequently replaced by, the railway. Even so, stage-coaches were coordinated to feed the railway schedule and carry mail for outlying settlements. However, monopolist tactics were soon introduced: the railway called for tenders to

---

[42] Geoffrey Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance shaped Australia's History*, (Melbourne, 1982), p. 260.
[43] THE MAIN LINE RAILWAY, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 3 January 1876, p. 2.
[44] Postal Arrangements, in ibid., 3 April 1871, p. 2.
[45] WHAT STRANGERS THINK ABOUT TASMANIAN ROADS AND RAILWAYS, in *Launceston Examiner*, 10 May 1877, p. 3.
[46] George Hawley Stancombe, *Highway in Van Diemen's Land* (Glendessary, Western Junction, Tas., 1968), p. 52.
[47] *Launceston Examiner*, 15 May 1878, p. 3.

carry the mail to Carrick and Hadspen, indicating a clear intention to establish a vertical monopoly over the mail system by sub-contracting.[48] Nevertheless, William Spearman remained adaptive, moved further west, and combined a mail contract with a stage-coach service from the rail-head at Deloraine on to Latrobe.[49]

Small, sequential-sector enterprises developed that line on to Emu Bay. The enterprise to Latrobe used a 12-passenger coach,[50] and the Emu Bay-Torquay enterprise employed a two-horse American coach.[51] Thus transport development into the north-west region as the railway progressed, resembled the earlier spread of stage-coach branches when fed by population growth. From a business enterprise perspective, what commentators such as Stancombe perceived as the end of the stage-coach era, resembled the origins of the industry. The difference was that in the beginning, English coaches were used and the government improved the roads to suit the vehicles; in the second half-century, the poor roads developed and maintained by a plethora of under-financed, small road trusts, necessitated that the vehicles be suited to the road surface (ie *vice versa*).

The free carriage of newspapers had never been in the interest of the stage-coach enterprises, and the railway was better suited to the task. However, carriage of parcels and small goods had been one source of mitigating operating costs and the monopolist railways sought to capitalise on the same opportunity. One Branxholm store-keeper was prepared to wait a week for his parcels to be delivered by coach, rather than pay the 'exorbitant' railway freight charges.[52] Therefore, the new transport technology did not necessarily lower the cost of living, but if coaches no longer offered an alternative, the monopolies would have to be endured.

Regionally-driven Change

In the latter half of the century, when government rewards for the discovery of commercially viable deposits of minerals augmented the desire for easy wealth spurred by the overseas gold discoveries, gold was discovered at Fingal and brought

---

[48] CONVEYANCE OF MAILS, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 13 March 1872, p. 2.
[49] Ibid., 21 June 1876, p. 2.
[50] *Launceston Examiner*, 10 September 1879, p. 2 and 30 December 1879, p. 3.
[51] COACH FROM EMU BAY TO TORQUAY, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 3 August 1877, p. 4.
[52] *North-Eastern Advertiser*, 25 July 1911, p. 2.

into production in the area in 1856. Gold was also discovered in several locations north-east of Launceston, and a significant strike was made at Beaconsfield, on the west side of the Tamar in 1877.[53] Additionally, greater wealth was brought into the economy by discoveries of tin in the north-west and west, at Mt Bischoff (1873) and Mt Heemskirk (1878), and of silver and lead at Mt Zeehan in 1882, which prompted the government to investigate the development of ports on the west coast, and to finance the development of roads and tracks; Mt Bischoff for example, required a track of 77 miles.[54] However, as with the cross and bye roads, the nature of the mining-driven developmental tracks and roadways spurred the use of lighter vehicles where steel-sprung English coaches were unsuitable.

Settlements therefore sprang up to service these mining ventures, introduced populations into areas not settled by the pastoralists and farmers, and created a new regional need for transport and logistic services with their supporting infrastructure. Timing and relative proximity to existing routes ensured a greater opportunity for passenger services to be swiftly introduced into the Fingal, north-east and Tamar areas, than in the north-western and western areas, in which accessibility was always difficult, and where more modern technology, including shipping, was needed to solve haulage and capacity problems.

The Fingal finds belonged to the Tasmanian pre-railway period and a special coach was run from Hobart Town to carry prospectors to the new goldfield.[55] When another goldfield was discovered 'at some distance from Fingal', the lucky prospector returned to Hobart Town by coach with his samples, but would not disclose the location.[56] The route from Corners through Fingal to the east coast had already been somewhat developed to meet the regional mail requirements, but 'open a post office and a "pub" will inevitably follow', and the construction of an inn at Falmouth was supervised by the son of the owner of the *Corners*, James Smith, ensuring a family business network on the route.[57]

---

[53] Glyn Roberts, *The Role of Government in the Development of the Tasmanian Metal Mining Industry: 1803-1883* (Hobart, 1999), pp. 13-96.
[54] Ibid., pp. 79-121.
[55] TASMANIAN GOLD-FIELD, in *The Courier*, 3 March 1852, p. 2.
[56] A New Gold Field, in *The Hobarton Mercury*, 15 October 1856, p. 3.
[57] T. McManus, *Thanks to Providence* (Launceston, 1993), p. 84.

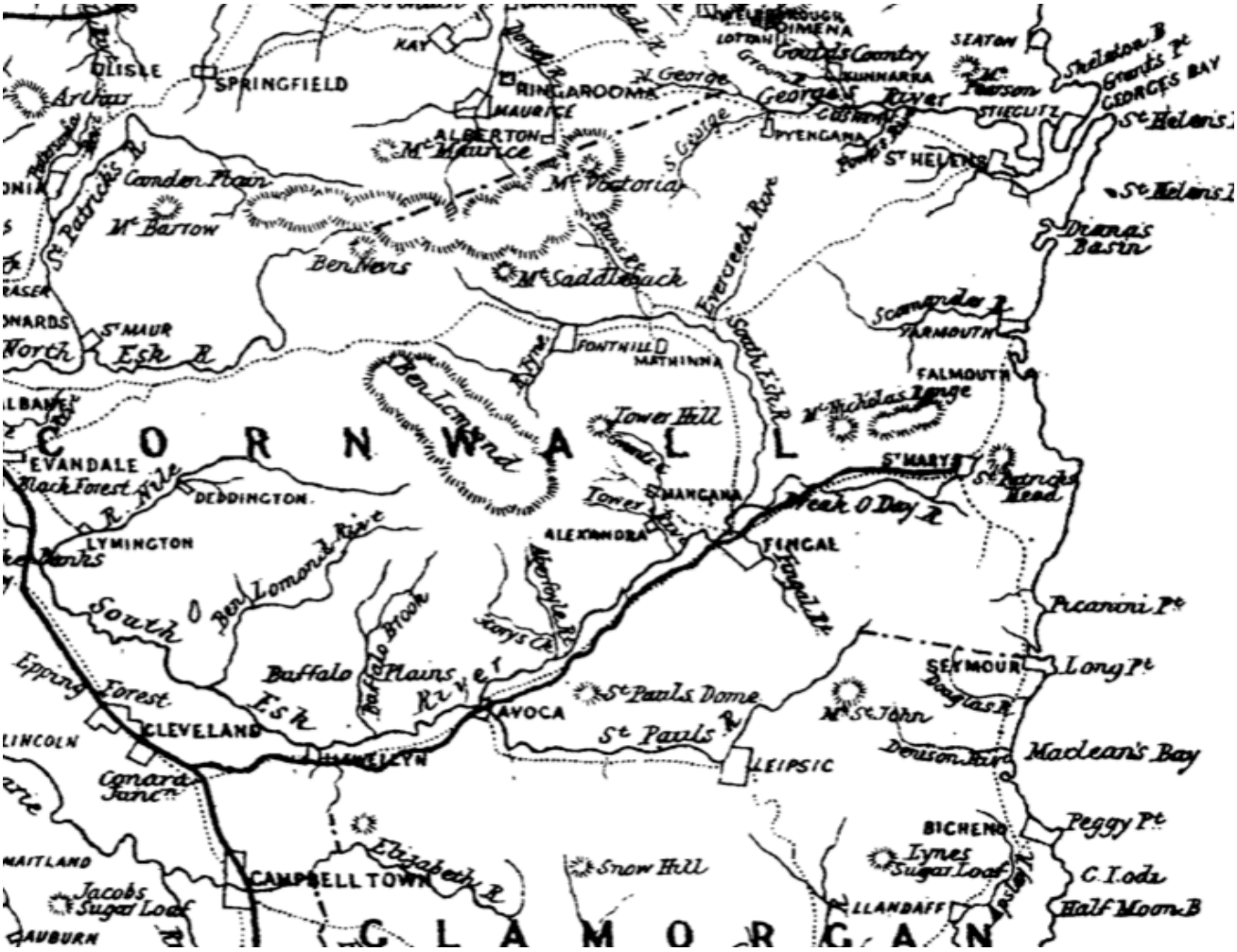


Fig. 8.2 – *Walch's Tasmanian Almanack*, 1906 - Fingal region

Although Askin Morrison's newly imported traction engine hauled heavy machinery from Hobart Town to Fingal,[58] and Jones & Turner ran specials from Launceston to the Deloraine races using the four horse-power steam omnibus *Surprise*, and what might have been a train of carriages (the *Great Western*) hauled by a traction engine,[59] there was little serious colonial consideration of steam-powered stage-coaches, which had proved unsuitable in England. Turner & Jones's enterprise was quickly dissolved.[60]

Meanwhile on the Fingal route, John Smith ran coaches through to Falmouth until he sold them to Samuel Page, who subsequently 'disposed of' them to his son.[61] Samuel Page junior however maintained the Smith family network on the route by

[58] THE TRACTION ENGINE, in *The Mercury*, 8 August 1865, p. 2.
[59] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 8 March 1865, p. 4.
[60] Ibid., 26 April 1865, p. 6.
[61] Ibid., 15 October 1873, p. 3 and 9 May 1877, p. 1.

marrying Louisa Jessie Smith.[62] The couple operated the coaching enterprise for fifteen years and developed a north-east coastal, branch route structure after the arrival of the Fingal railway, until Samuel was declared bankrupt, albeit with some confusion as to whether he or his wife owned the assets of the business; but although Louisa took over the operations, she too was soon declared bankrupt and the business was wound up.[63] Their example showed how stage-coach entrepreneurs adapted to the spread of the railways, provided a service where the railways could/would not, continued to operate as small enterprises with family networks, in which women played a partnership or ownership role, and in this case, showed a continued involvement in stage-coaching by the Page family.

Fig. 8.3 – *Walch's Tasmanian Almanack*, 1906 - North-east

Another similar, though later, regional pattern was in the north-east. A road was put through from Bridport on the north coast to satisfy settler needs before minerals were discovered to the east and north-east of Scottsdale, but it was not until a mail contract was let that a direct route from Launceston was opened up and a stage-

[62] Louise Higham, *Samuel Page of Tasmania* (Unpublished, 2010), p. 1.
[63] *Launceston Examiner*, 27 February 1892, p. 5 and 1 July 1893, p. 8.

coach service quickly followed. Loone said Cobb & Co operated on the route but 'ran one trip only';[64] this might have been a start-up operator using a former Cobb & Co vehicle, otherwise the statement seems inexplicable. William Spearman ran the first coach to make the trip from Launceston to Ringarooma in a single day.[65] Shortly, Loone & Bonner ran coaches from Launceston through to Branxholm[66] and their small business successors continued after the opening of mineral extraction and introduction of the region's railways.

The case of gold discoveries on both sides of the Tamar north of Launceston was somewhat different, as the opportunity for water transport obviated the need to construct lengthy railways. Almost immediately, road transport services were established for passengers: Gamble ran a break to Nine Mile Springs, and C. Hall a break to Brandy Creek.[67] These small lightweight vehicles were probably an immediate response to the poor condition of the tracks, but larger vehicles were soon introduced: eg William Spearman moved in to service Lefroy.[68] Breaks also serviced Beaconsfield before Spearman's coaches assumed that route too.[69]

Spearman's operation, with Launceston as its hub and servicing districts to the east, north and west, was a significant enterprise, and in several of those areas stage-coaches remained the primary means of public transport until motorised. W.J. Southerwood (with a five-horse coach)[70] took over Spearman's route network and went on to acquire the Launceston Omnibus and Tramway Company. His assets thus combined amounted to a major transport enterprise servicing urban and regional passenger needs, carrier and haulage requirements, with integral, consolidated stabling and other horsing facilities.[71] He undoubtedly achieved efficiencies through such amalgamation and acquired a significant monopoly over the northern, horse-driven, transport industry.

---

[64] A.W. Loone, *Tasmania's North-East : a comprehensive history of north-eastern Tasmania and its people* (Launceston, 1928), p. 14.
[65] UPPER RINGAROOMA, in *Launceston Examiner*, 22 April 1884, p. 2.
[66] MESSRS. LOONE AND BONNER'S, in ibid., 4 September 1886, p. 2.
[67] J. Walch, *Walch's Tasmanian Almanack* (Hobart, 1878), p. 178.
[68] Ibid., 1882, p. 197.
[69] *Launceston Examiner*, 6 June 1884, p. 2.
[70] Ibid., 29 September 1892, p. 3.
[71] Ibid., 29 September 1894, p. 8.

Although transport requirements to the north-west sprang from agrarian development and small population growth, the western diggings produced a pull factor for transiting travellers. For instance, prospectors who had heard the distance from Deloraine to the Pieman was 40 (actually 150) miles, and who had already walked from Hobart, were very grateful to receive a free ride on Spearman's break to Latrobe.[72] Small coach enterprises and innkeepers also cooperated to synchronise connections to and from Launceston with the Emu Bay Railway schedules, and at the far end of the railway, from Waratah onwards, as there was no suitable overland route from Hobart and the only other alternative was by ship.[73]

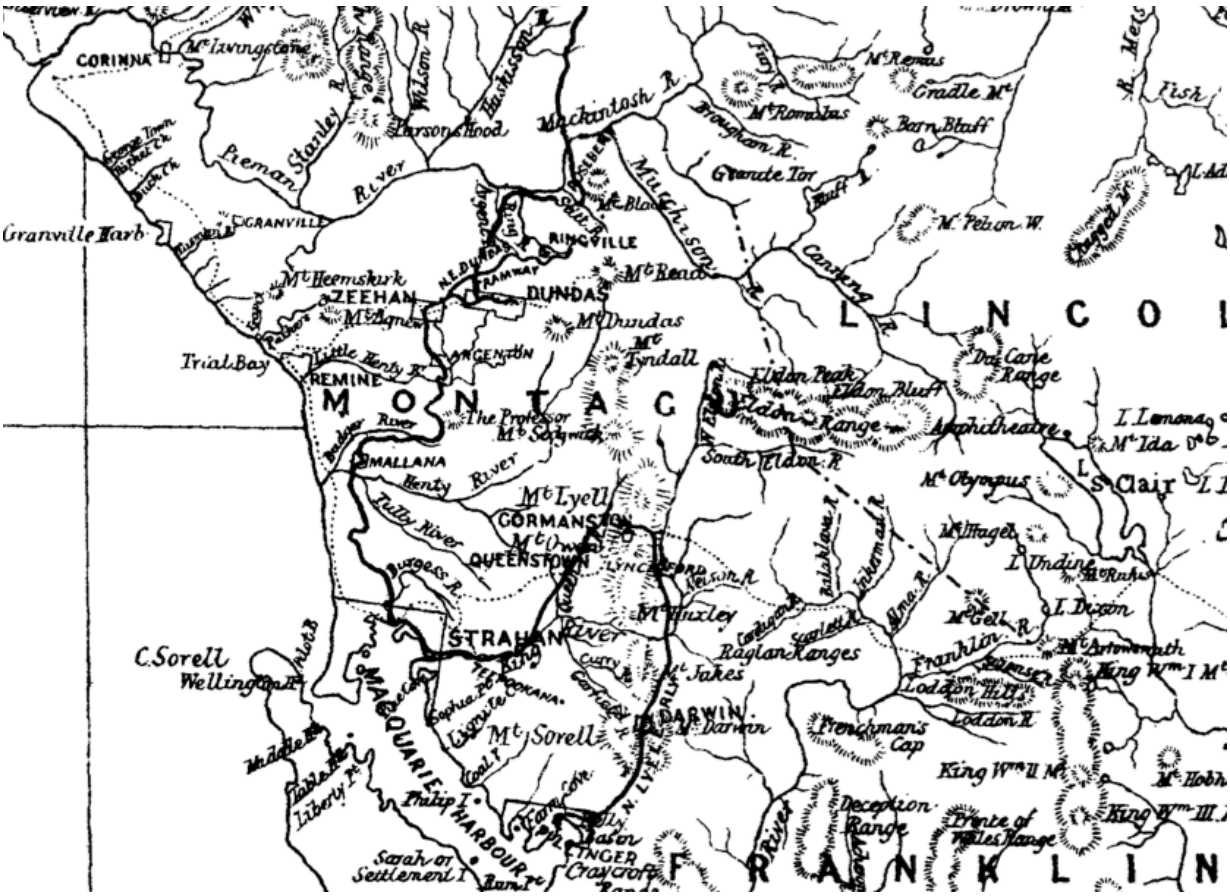


Fig. 8.4 – *Walch's Tasmanian Almanack*, 1906 - The West Coast

Communication with the Mt Zeehan and Mt Lyell areas was therefore difficult, yet the mines induced a population boom. Zeehan received no mention in the 1881 Census; but the 1901 Census showed a population of 5014, and that of Queenstown 5051, making the two mining towns the third and fourth most populous in Tasmania. Add to that Gormanston (1760) and Waratah (1265) and the western

[72] TASMANIAN GENEROSITY, in ibid., 31 May 1882, p. 3.
[73] Ibid., 14 February 1883, p. 3 and 23 June 1892, p. 4.

mining region boasted a population approaching that of Launceston (18022)[74] and produced an intra-regional requirement for public transport.

The first stage-coach (licensed for 11 passengers) arrived by steamer from Hobart in late 1890 to be used between Zeehan and Remine, on the coast, and once the road had been suitably made up a service was opened to Dundas early the following year.[75] However, perhaps reflecting the later flotation of the Mt Lyell Mining Company,[76] Queenstown-based services did not commence until a little later, first to Gormanston and then on to Linda Valley.[77] Separate mining companies or the difficulty of the terrain might also explain the later development, and the extreme gradient probably accounted for the use of a light two-horse coach on the route.[78]

However, notwithstanding the isolation of the area, stage-coach enterprises resembled those elsewhere in the island. G.W. Burton, the foremost proprietor in the Queenstown area, ran a family business and also held the mail contract.[79] Competition appeared, price-cutting ensued, and one of the unsuccessful proprietors was a woman, Mrs E.C. Kelly who was also an innkeeper.[80]

Incentive for any construction of a direct link for the region with Hobart centred on the commercial benefits to be derived by the point of export of the extracted materials. Therefore northern and southern interests competed for the trade, but considerations for a railway concentrated on the carriage of materiel, and little thought was given to passengers. A direct line to Hobart was considered unviable without settlement along the route and consequently the proposal was not adopted.[81]

---

[74] J. Walch, *Walch's Tasmanian Almanack* (Hobart, 1906), pp. 263-65.
[75] *Zeehan and Dundas Herald*, 26 November 1890, p. 3 and 18 May 1891, p. 2.
[76] Glyn Roberts, *Metal mining in Tasmania 1804 to 1914 : how government helped shape the mining industry* (Launceston, 2007), p. 144.
[77] *Zeehan and Dundas Herald*., 23 July 1902, p. 4 and 1 January 1904, p. 4.
[78] Ibid., 20 April 1915, p. 4.
[79] Ibid. January 1913, p. 4 and 24 September 1912, p. 4.
[80] Ibid., 3 November 1906, p. 1.
[81] Roberts, *Metal mining in Tasmania 1804 to 1914 : how government helped shape the mining industry*, pp. 363-73.

Fig. 8.5 – *Walch's Tasmanian Almanack*, 1906 - Upper Derwent, Hobart and environs

Nevertheless, stage-coaches played a part on the route. An early prospecting party had deployed to the area by ship, but some returned overland via Hamilton and proceeded to Hobart Town by stage-coach.[82] In 1897 an arrangement was made with Samuel Page's son Sydney, to run a coach to Derwent Bridge from where passengers would continue on horseback. The government had committed to improving the track, and Sydney Page advertised a weekly service from Gormanston to Hobart.[83] He used a four-horse stage-coach from the upper Derwent Valley rail head at Macquarie Plains to Lake St Clair, from where his passengers proceeded on horseback to Linda Valley.[84] Thus he tested the route and demonstrated a capability to make the journey to or from Hobart in two days, but the service closed for the season the same year,[85] and was not subsequently advertised, presumably because its seasonal vulnerability and low uptake made it commercially unviable for a regular passenger transport venture.

Societal Change, and Change of Use

Of course, there were areas not affected by railway or mining development, and where regional and local transport needs continued to be met by a mix of horse-drawn vehicles. In areas such as the Huon and southwards, the Tasman Peninsula and the central east coast, communications development was steady, and other than by coastal or riverine means, there was no alternative to foot or animal powered transport. However, as Tasmanian society developed in the latter half of the 19th century, stage-coach enterprises adapted their services to meet new requirements and expectations, capitalise on opportunities and integrate with other travel services.

One area of general concern for the developing civil society was the very high level of drunkenness, and more specifically inebriacy as it affected the drivers, guards and passengers of stage-coaches. Although the *Stage Coach Act (1836)* had proscribed the carriage of any intoxicated persons,[86] the legislation proved no

---

[82] TASMANIAN WEST COAST MINERAL PROSPECTING ASSOCIATION, in *The Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 2 June 1859, p. 2.
[83] *Zeehan and Dundas Herald*, 2 February 1897, p. 2 and 20 March 1897, p. 3.
[84] OVERLAND ROUTE TO THE WEST COAST, in *The Mercury*, 9 March 1897, p. 3 and 15 March 1897, p. 2.
[85] OVERLAND COACH, in *Launceston Examiner*, 1 April 1897, p. 6.
[86] His Excellency Colonel George Arthur Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, 'An

deterrent. Several groups, principally the Temperance Society acted to provide an alternative to hard liquor. In one example, the Good Templars proposed 'adopting measures for getting a supply of tea and coffee wherever stage coaches call ; by which means the inducement to travellers to drink intoxicating beverages will be much lessened'.[87]

Route networks developed whereby 'Coffee Palaces' substituted for inns and aligned with stage-coach operators of a temperance persuasion. Cornwall Auxiliary Bible Society member Mr Veitch operated his conveyance to Perth from the *Cornwall Coffee Rooms* in Launceston.[88] The *Latrobe Coffee Palace* advertised itself as an alternative choice for 'passengers by up and down coaches', and Flight's coach ran between *Best's Temperance Hotel*, Emu Bay and *Whitaker's Coffee Palace*, Latrobe.[89] These associations were advertised in the conveyances section of the newspapers, where descriptions such as 'family hotel' also began to appear. Nevertheless, passengers could exercise freedom of choice without the temperance societies achieving their aim: one party dined at the *Branxholm Coffee Palace* but 'wet their whistles' en route at the *Camp Hotel*.[90] Notably, the efforts of the temperance movement seemed more prominent in the north than in the south of the island.

If coffee was a means towards reducing alcoholism, it was also a fashionable commodity: a point not lost on the entrepreneurs. The hospitality market was competitive and in New Norfolk in 1835 one hostelry advertised 'the London style, with a coffee room where gentlemen … can smoke their cigar and … wait for the coaches'.[91] Also, when competition was at its fiercest, and as befitted a gambling society, Samuel Page was shrewd enough to offer both a free 'cup of coffee [and] a nobler of old Tom' as part of his cut-price fare.[92] However, the quality of goods and services might have been reflected in the price: Captain Keppel remarked upon 'the

---

Act for the Regulation of Stage Coaches', in *6 William IV No 12 (1836)*, Colonial Government of Van Diemen's Land (Hobart Town, 1836), Section 10.

[87] *Launceston Examiner*, 28 July 1874, p. 3.

[88] Ibid., 12 March 1842, p. 2 and 29 January 1845, p. 1.

[89] Ibid., 18 December 1882, p. 3, 4 October 1884, p. 5 and 2 February 1887, p. 4.

[90] *North-Eastern Advertiser*, 1 July 1910, p. 3.

[91] STAR & GARTER WINE VAULTS, in *The Hobart Town Courier*, 27 March 1835, p. 1.

[92] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 31 October 1850, p. 754.

"coming" waiter, with bad brandy, and worse cigars' in his account of his Tasmanian travel experiences.[93]

The increasing ease of crossing the Bass Strait created an awareness of the quality of hospitality services in Melbourne, raised expectations and encouraged a transition from the old inns to more modern hotels. Thus when the Victorians became involved in tendering for the mail contracts, rumours spread of accompanying Melbourne style hotels.[94] By then, Samuel Page had relocated his northern terminus from the *Cornwall Hotel* to the *Launceston Club Hotel*, which advertised 'Private rooms, hot, cold, and shower baths'.[95] He was therefore watchful of his competition, alert to the need for a modern image ('Club Hotel' badging), and aware of his customer base, which again seemed more animated in the north than in the south.

The market was changing during the latter half of the century and the island's population increasingly had time and money to spend on leisure activities. Anthony Trollope considered Tasmania 'a Paradise for a working man as compared with England', but did not consider it different from the other colonies in that respect.[96] Therefore, increasingly, visitors also arrived from the mainland for a range of vacation, tourism, sports and social reasons. Thus both the local and inter-colonial populations presented new opportunities for the stage-coach and broader travel industries, which challenged the regular passenger transport service concept and led to supplementation of services through specials or excursions.

Tasmania became a favourite holiday resort for mainlanders, particularly for the Sydney and Melbourne business class, and especially during the summer months.[97] Other than the sights of Hobart and Mt Wellington, the Huon, New Norfolk, Lake St Clair and Port Arthur became tourist destinations renowned for their beautiful scenery.[98] Stage-coaches on regular passenger transport services covered the New Norfolk route, but in the Huon a circular tour could be arranged through a

---

[93] TASMANIA IN 1850. THE HON. SIR HENRY KEPPEL'S IMPRESSIONS, in *The Mercury*, 23 February 1904, p. 2.
[94] *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 19 June 1867, p. 5.
[95] LAUNCESTON CLUB HOTEL, in *Launceston Examiner*, 9 January 1867, p. 3.
[96] Anthony Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand* (London, 1968), p. 42.
[97] P.F. Bolger, 'The Changing Role of a City: Hobart', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, vol. 16, no. 1 (1968), pp. 12-13.
[98] Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand*, p. 52.

sequence of stage-coach and steamer.[99] A similar mix of transport could be used for visits to Port Arthur, although there was criticism of the Tasmanian Tourism Association for promoting a special coach where a perfectly suitable regular stage-coach offered a service.[100] For the middle of the island, 'Parties of ladies and gentlemen wishing to spend a few days at Lake St. Clair' could contact Sydney Page to coordinate their arrangements, which required a mix of train, and scheduled and special stage-coaches.[101]

For some overseas visitors, travelling in an old English stage-coach was an experience and attraction in itself, inducing nostalgia about the pre-railway era.[102] Four-in-hand driving also became fashionable in the latter half of the century and when the Duke of Edinburgh visited the island he took the opportunity to drive the coach to Launceston, hauled by four of Samuel Page's greys.[103] The main road stage-coach entrepreneurs often horsed the Governor's coach, or provided horses, coaches and drivers for the Governor and his party. For instance, Anthony Trollope accompanied the Governor and the Premier in one of Page's coaches during one official visit to the north.[104]

Tasmania coordinated large events to attract inter-colonial visitors. In 1860 (1861? see later), 'Toby' sailed to Hobart to attend the 'Champion Races', the inter-colonial cricket match, the inter-colonial boat race and the 'Exhibition, all at the same time'.[105] Around the race meetings, he contracted to buy five racehorses and then travelled to Melbourne via Launceston, taking the stage-coach. Many of the visitors, having 'tired of the rounds of pleasure' took the opportunity to visit New Norfolk and Port Arthur.[106] Another large event, the visit of the all-England cricket team,

---

[99] BEAUTIES OF THE HUON, in *The Mercury*, 11 February 1911, p. 8.
[100] Letter, TRAVELLER, dated February 18, 1908, in ibid., 20 February 1908, p. 2.
[101] Ibid., 15 March 1897, p. 2.
[102] Godfrey Charles Mundy, *Our antipodes, or, Residence and rambles in the Australasian colonies: with a glimpse of the gold fields* (London, 1852), pp. 229-32.
[103] Allan Sierp, *Colonial life in Tasmania : fifty years of photography, 1855-1905* (Adelaide, 1976), p. 73.
[104] *Launceston Examiner*, 6 February 1872, p. 2.
[105] James T. Ryan, *Reminiscences of Australia... containing 70 years of his own knowledge, and 35 years of his ancestors* (Sydney, 1895), p. 198.
[106] Ibid., pp. 202-03.

employed the stage-coaches of both main road enterprises: Page carried the team, and Brown carried the local committee.[107]

While north and south competed for the tourist trade, the entrepreneurs acted in self-interest. During the Page-Burbury competition, some Launceston hoteliers complained the stage-coaches touted customers straight off the steamers to carry them south at cheap rates, thereby depriving the northerners of their commercial opportunities. The *Cornwall Chronicle* was 'in favor of legitimate rivalry — not enmity — between north and south', but acknowledged cheap fares also brought the tourists back north, where they lingered before departure.[108]

Stage-coach enterprises were not the only opportunists. Launceston cab drivers were believed to be charging extortionate rates to take tourists around the town. To counteract this, the Police Magistrate, who was a member of the Tourist Association, admitted the association had been selling individual tickets for multiple seats in cabs, which the association contracted to carry the tourists at reasonable rates. The matter came to a head because the practice made the cab a stage-coach under the separate fare provision of the *Police Act (1865)*. The association admitted acting contrary to the law, but claimed it had done so 'in the public interest'.[109] Individual cabbies were also known to be charging multiple separate fares and the situation was widespread, including for trips to the races and other events.

Like the visitors, Tasmanians also travelled for vacations, and those wishing 'for a change to the seaside' could escape the towns by stage-coach.[110] The private boarding house was one of the establishments, which Catherine Bishop mentioned as suitable to be run by respectable Victorian women and the stage-coach industry seemed to consist largely of such reputable networks.[111] However, one facility, which she categorised as 'lodgings with every convenience' might have been George Frost's, whose advertisements appealing to the 'gentry' to patronise his establishment,

---

[107] THE ELEVEN OF ALL ENGLAND, in *The Mercury*, 19 February 1862, p. 2 and 22 February 1862, p. 2.
[108] COMPLAINTS, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 20 January 1875, p. 2.
[109] TOURISTS' CAB DRIVES … A CAB OR A STAGE COACH? in *Launceston Examiner*, 15 April 1899, p. 12.
[110] SWANSEA PRIVATE BOARDING ESTABLISHMENT, in *The Mercury*, 13 March 1888, p. 3.
[111] Catherine Bishop, *Minding her own Business: Colonial Businesswomen in Sydney* (Sydney, 2015), pp. 96-98.

which was recognised by 'the Faculty' as the 'El Dorado of Tasmania' where they could enjoy the 'well-known care of "Mine Hostess"' were certainly ambiguous.[112]

Progressively, as vacations became usual, the stage-coach and travel industries had to factor in the need for seasonal, surge capacity to carry holiday-makers such as miners going on Christmas leave.[113] The increasing availability of leisure time also prompted the pursuit of a range of activities, which required transport services into regional and remote areas.

Foremost among these was fishing. In 1867, the New Norfolk coach delivered a 3½ lb fish, rumoured to be a salmon, to Hobart. It subsequently proved to be a trout, but nevertheless encouraged freshwater anglers up the Derwent.[114] Fishermen at Lake Leake could use a thrice-weekly regular stage-coach service from Campbell Town, and special coaches could be arranged from Bothwell to the Highland Lakes, where 'Good boats and permanent camp man' were provided. [115]

Other pastimes involved shorter duration, or single day visits. Entrepreneurs put on special coaches for shooting matches, for which the prizes were racehorses.[116] Travel for a coursing match at Cambridge was achieved via coordinated boat and stage-coach, with an extra coach laid on if there were sufficient demand; and rabbit and hare shooting around Richmond could be had either by regular stage-coach from Bellerive, or a connecting stage-coach with the train at Campania. [117] There was also travel for hunting, but that remained largely, but not exclusively, the pursuit of wealthier men such as James Lord (Chapter 5).

The establishment normally travelled independently, whereas the general public utilised the public transport services. Similarly, while the landowners gathered in the *Tasmanian Club*, Richard Waterhouse's 'working class' men and women associated in other ways and for other purposes.[118] However, the objectives of organisations such as the working-men's clubs reflected educational and temperance

---

[112] *The Hobarton Mercury*, 6 June 1855, p. 3 and 7 December 1855, p. 1.
[113] DERBY, in *The Mercury*, 29 December 1908, p. 7.
[114] TROUT FROM THE PLENTY, in ibid., 18 June 1867, p. 2.
[115] LAKE LEAKE FISHING, in ibid., 4 November 1908, p. 2 and 6 April 1889, p. 1.
[116] *The Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 5 May 1858, p. 4 and 19 June 1858, p. 3.
[117] *The Mercury*, 27 September 1887, p. 3 and 10 January 1894, p. 3.
[118] Richard Waterhouse, *Private Pleasures, Public Leisure: A History of Australian Popular Culture since 1788* (Melbourne, 1995), p. x.

attitudes, and provided another coffee alternative to the inns.[119] Such clubs, associations and other groups ran excursions for their members, using stage-coaches and steamers.

Some excursions required considerable coordination. For instance, Thompson Bros ran coaches from Sorell to link up with the *SS Koonya's* 'pleasure trip' to the Norfolk Bay Regatta; the Pembroke Brass Band performed during the cruise. Similarly, the Federal Band accompanied the steamer *Taranna's* moonlight fishing excursion during which tackle was provided and 'plenty sport' was expected.[120] A coach met the 'Excursion Train at Macquarie Plains EVERY SUNDAY giving Excursionists the opportunity of enjoying the pleasant drive through the Gretna and Macquarie Plains Estates', and Huon coach proprietors ran a weekly excursion to the Hartz Mountains.[121] Thus some excursions were regular and some might be event driven; however, all offered the stage-coach enterprises an opportunity for extra business, often in conjunction with rail and steamer, but always in a way that only horse-drawn vehicles could provide at that time.

Large or small, events relied upon the support of private enterprise to provide public, road transport. The annual Regatta was one large example; in 1854, Fisher's four-horse coaches and Frost's drag augmented the city cabs to carry passengers to the event.[122] When Brown's *Leviathan* eight-horse coach had carried 62 passengers from Launceston, it was so that 'colonists and visitors' could enjoy 'a time of "Carnival"', comprising 'The Review, the Races, the Regatta, the Flower Show, the Theatre, [and] the Hippodrome'.[123] Of course, northerners would not allow such an event to pass without competition and introduced the annual Launceston carnival, which Trollope attended in 1872.[124]

Coaches provided transport for the many, smaller events, which enriched the social life of settlements away from the two main towns. Rule's coach offered a means of attending a military ball at Kingston, and Robinson's coach did likewise for

---

[119] Stefan Petrow, 'Leisure for the Toilers: The Hobart Working Men's Club 1864-1887', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, vol. 49, no. 2 (2002), pp. 73-80.
[120] *The Mercury*, 31 October 1887, p. 3.
[121] Ibid., 6 April 1889, p. 1 and 10 February 1905, p. 5.
[122] SANDY BAY REGATTA, in *Colonial Times*, 19 January 1854, p. 2.
[123] *The Mercury*, 2 December 1861, p. 2.
[124] THE CARNIVAL WEEK, in *Launceston Examiner*, 6 February 1872, p. 2.

a concert and dance at the Buckland Hall.[125] In the north, Fyfe ran a coach from Evandale for patrons of a concert at the Nile assembly rooms, and Samuel Page junior took passengers from Mangana to Fingal for St Patrick's Day festivities in his four-horse coach.[126] Such small, local coaching enterprises were integral, if not essential, parts of their community and often provided services in a philanthropic spirit.

Bazaars were a popular way by which groups raised funds. Samuel Page and Mr Mills carried parcels for the Melton Mowbray chapel building fund bazaar free of charge, and Webster's Huon coach offered the same service for parcels donated towards the Wesleyan church's bazaar at Franklin to raise funds to build a Sunday school.[127] Church organisations comprised another group, which the stage-coach enterprises supported particularly for excursions, but which was not well documented. Photographs show groups travelling for picnics, but without attribution, and such travel services might be another example of local coach proprietors providing free support to their local church or community.

Of course, travel into regional areas was not all for pleasure. A coach from Green Ponds, coordinated with the main road service, enabled 'parents desirous of forwarding their children' to Mr Smith's boarding school in Bothwell to do so, or visit them there.[128] Horton College and the ladies' school at Ellenthorpe were other examples of schools using the regular main road coach services; and Christ's College Bishopsbourne arranged a special conveyance to link with the Hobart Town day coaches at Perth.[129] Many such regional businesses, and in this case those developing social capital, depended on local, small enterprises to provide transport services.

Travelling salesmen relied on the regular coach services to carry them and their samples, and parcels could be forwarded to regional purchasers by the same means. In a slightly different vein, the location and timing of one travelling dentist's services were determined by the regional stage-coach schedule; the 'greatly reduced'

[125] *The Mercury*, 11 August 1908, p. 3 and 29 May 1911, p. 2.
[126] *Launceston Examiner*, 6 June 1884, p. 2 and 22 March 1890, p. 2.
[127] *The Mercury*, 5 April 1864, p. 3 and 7 September 1882, p. 3.
[128] EDUCATIONAL, in *Colonial Times*, 17 January 1853, p. 3.
[129] THE COLLEGE, in *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 16 July 1851, p. 441.

artificial teeth, which accompanied him were an additional, financial incentive for his customers.[130]

By the early 20th century, special coaches were put on so sporting teams could compete outside their immediate neighbourhood. Some, such as the boys atop 'one of Thompson and Macmichael's five-horse coaches' were from schools; others were from community groups, but all seemed to enjoy singing during their journeys on the 'specials'.[131] Cricket teams had been carried since the early days, but football teams were increasingly carried in the latter period. Most of these were male teams, but not exclusively.

In one example of societal progression, the Broadmarsh ladies' cricket team travelled by train to Parattah and from there by three coaches 'to Oatlands to try conclusions with the Oatlands ladies'.[132] Of note in this case, a branch rail line had been built from the main line at Parattah into Oatlands, but had been closed because it was not viable. The branch route had therefore reverted to more financially sustainable, horse-drawn vehicles. Economic rationalism overcame railway-mania, but only after experience forced the issue.

Even by the late 1870s, stage-coaches already represented a bygone era, and had become a subject for literature and a source of entertainment, socially and physically. Burton's Circus took the English tale of Dick Turpin and Black Bess on the road from Launceston to northern region townships, and a new feature of the presentation was 'the "bailing up" of the York mail, a genuine mail coach and four being driven right through the circus'.[133] Thus the mail coach was both a subject of the story and a prop for its production.

A real mail coach and horses were similarly used in staging 'The Most Successful Australian Drama ever produced, ROBBERY UNDER ARMS' at the Theatre Royal in Hobart.[134] W. Ikin provided the coach and horses, which were

---

[130] NORTH-WEST COAST. S. SICKLEMORE, DENTIST, in *Launceston Examiner*, 25 April 1893, p. 4.
[131] School Football. BRANXHOLM DEFEAT SCOTTSDALE, in *North-Eastern Advertiser*, 16 May 1911, p. 4 and 1 July 1910, p. 3.
[132] LADIES' CRICKET MATCH. BROADMARSH V. OATLANDS, in *The Mercury*, 28 December 1906, p. 6.
[133] BURTON'S CIRCUS, in *Launceston Examiner*, 25 February 1879, p. 2.
[134] THEATRE ROYAL, in *The Mercury*, 9 August 1892, p. 3.

trained by Miss Lily Dampier, and Cooley's buses ran to the theatre. Stage-coaches were thus elements of the production and a means by which the public could attend a major event either in one of the two towns, or in the case of the circus, in the regions; but before that time, stage-coaches had also carried theatre companies between venues.

In a similar way, regional enterprises enabled other troupes of performers, often amateur, church or social groups, to entertain country audiences. The 25 members of the Austral Guards Band of the Salvation Army, who visited Scottsdale to play at the Mechanics Institute, travelled on to Derby by coach to entertain audiences there, before staging an open-air concert on their return.[135] The visit must have encouraged an interest in music because some years later the Derby Musical Society travelled by coach to Scottsdale to deliver their own performance at the Mechanics' Hall.[136]

With railways, steamers and stage-coaches providing such integral regular passenger transport as well as specials and excursion travel, there was clearly a need for coordination and advertisement of the total travel service. No *Bradshaw* was produced for Tasmania, and although F.B. Maning had proposed one, there was presumably insufficient backing for his proposal.[137] Later, *Haywood's Guide to Tasmania* was produced, but in any case such a publication was intended more for visitors than for residents.[138]

Instead, progressively, railway company schedules were advertised which included coordinated branch stage-coach services; the stage-coaches published their schedules in the newspapers under the collocated heading 'conveyances'; and almanacs presented a fairly comprehensive description of all travel services, although only annually. Variations in the meantime had to be updated in the newspapers, and specials and excursions had to be similarly advertised. The Tasmanian Tourism Association also played a part in the coordination and promotion of travel services,

---

[135] SCOTTSDALE, in ibid., 19 September 1904, p. 6.
[136] *North-Eastern Advertiser*, 16 January 1912, p. 2.
[137] TASMANIAN BRADSHAW, in *The Mercury*, 11 May 1881, p. 3 and 9 June 1881, p. 3.
[138] A LONG-FELT WANT WELL SUPPLIED. HAYWOOD'S GUIDE TO TASMANIA, in ibid., 27 January 1885, p. 2.

and inter-colony advertisement;[139] but of course, at the very local level, a notice on a bill-board, or word of mouth, would have sufficed.

Cooperation between business operators and mutually beneficial promotion went beyond the travel industry. One Huonville store offered to pay the coach fares of regional patrons attending its winter sale.[140] The idea was not original, because Johnston & Miller in Hobart, following their 'usual custom', offered the same reward to country residents visiting their stores during Hobart Show week.[141] However, perhaps the best example of stage-coaches being used for promotion was an advertisement for Doan's Backache Kidney Pills. Thomas Evans, coachman, who had 'been exposed to all kinds of weather since 1856, driving Page's coaches' suffered from persistent backache before taking the pills. As proof of his claimed cure he offered: 'It's the best proof, for it comes from Hobart'.[142] I have not been able to discover a remedy that might have been as effective in the north.

The domestic market for regular scheduled stage-coach services was thus driven by regional and especially mining development, connecting services for the railways, a continuing role in mail and parcel delivery, and an increasing need for intra-urban affordable mass transport. This domestic market was affected seasonally by demand for vacation and other leisure transport requirements, to which the industry responded by providing irregular, non-scheduled excursions and specials. Also somewhat seasonal, was the demand for extra capacity to cater for inter-colony and overseas visitors, who might use any of the existing services, or require augmented or further special services. These were the considerations which stage-coach entrepreneurs had to: factorise into their calculations of likely market demand; coordinate into the ways in which they provided their services around the programs of others; and determine the means (number, location and timing of vehicles, and a viable operating budget) required to deliver the services. Those calculations would have been particular to each enterprise.

---

[139] Marian Walker, *Memories, Dreams and Inventions: The Evolution of Tasmania's Tourism Image, 1803-1939* (University of Tasmania, PhD thesis, 2008), p. 218.
[140] C.S. MARSH'S HUONVILLE, OUR GREAT SALE, in *Huon Times*, (Franklin, Tas.1910 - 1933). 10 August 1910, p. 4.
[141] SHOW WEEK CARNIVAL. EXCURSION FARES PAID, in ibid., 15 October 1910, p. 6.
[142] *The Mercury*, 24 January 1901, p. 4.

Motorisation and the last stage-coach

Stage-coaches remained in service through two further changes in Tasmania at the end of the long 19th century. Workers and visitors travelled by coach to the hydro-electric works from the rail-head at Apsley, promoting Bothwell and augmenting the local economy;[143] and as a very small part of an era-ending change, 'roysterously happy' men from Derby, using their government travel warrants, left by coach to report for duty in the Great War.[144]

By 1910 there were almost 5000 motorised vehicles in Australia,[145] but the use of horse-drawn vehicles overlapped with motorised vehicles for some time, and the new technology presented new hazards. One dark evening as the Brown's River coach was in upper Sandy Bay the two leading horses suddenly dropped dead. '"Patch," an iron-grey, and "Larrikin," a chestnut with a white face' had been electrocuted by an overhead tram wire, which had become loose and was hanging in a loop across the road;[146] and in just one of many examples of a horse and motor traffic accident, a motor car overtaking the Kingston coach in 1910 struck the off leader as the car pulled back in.[147]

A combination of cost and lack of ubiquity prevented the railway from replacing the passenger carrying capability of the stage-coach, which therefore survived, and in places even revived. The demise of the stage-coach was instead linked to the introduction of the internal combustion engine, which initially had its own limitations, particularly regarding reliability, carrying capacity, and the *en route* availability of fuel and spare parts. Unsurprisingly therefore, the introduction of the motor came latest in the more remote areas, where stage-coaches remained in use until after the end of the Great War, at which time there were still over 2,500,000 horses in Australia.[148]

---

[143] HYDRO-ELECTRIC WORKS, in ibid., 21 February 1912, p. 4.
[144] DERBY NOTES and AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES, in *North-Eastern Advertiser*, 1 September 1914, p. 2 and 8 September 1914, p. 3.
[145] Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance shaped Australia's History*, p. 293.
[146] TWO HORSES ELECTROCUTED, in *The Mercury*, 2 July 1902, p. 3.
[147] RECKLESS MOTOR-CAR DRIVING, in ibid., 16 April 1910, p. 8.
[148] Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance shaped Australia's History*, p. 293.

In 1919, Holland's coaches, which had earlier claimed to have survived against all motor operators, closed its accounts in Derby.[149] In the north-west, Tatlow's still operated a mixed fleet of horse and motor power, and Marshall's ran a drag, although probably only for specials and excursions.[150] Also in the north-west, a coach was running from Marrawah to Temma, but in the centre of the island a motor coach was already in use at Hamilton.[151] A remote survivor was the mail coach to Dover, which was motorised at the beginning of December 1919.[152]

However, it was perhaps not the logistical difficulties associated with operating the new technology in remote areas, but the ability of a motorised vehicle to cope with steep inclines, which delayed the supplanting of arguably the last stage-coach in Tasmania. G.W. Burton's 'petrol fiend … a vehicle well calculated to successfully negotiate the twist and turns of the Lyell road' replaced the regular passenger transport, horse-drawn stage-coach on the route from Queenstown to Gormanston in late June 1920.[153]

Although some later reports of mail coaches, such as that operating from Oatlands indicate the lingering possibility of small services[154] including horse-drawn substitution for motors during bad weather in remote areas, the scheduled nature of the Queenstown service and the unambiguous description of its replacement in service lends it a very strong claim to be the last Tasmanian stage-coach; and the Prime Minister (Bruce) approved the purchase of 'the last coach used in Australia by Messrs Cobb and Co' (itself ambiguous) for the Commonwealth on 29 December 1924.[155]

Conclusion

Therefore contrasting Boyce's assertion that 'remarkably little changed [in Tasmania] after 1856' with Trollope's observation that 'Legislation in the colony is undemonstrative and unexciting. But I think that a quiet common sense prevails'[156]

---

[149] *North-Eastern Advertiser*, 26 February 1915, p. 1 and 18 April 1919, p. 3.
[150] *Advocate*, 4 January 1919, p. 8 and 16 May 1919, p. 4.
[151] HOW TO GET TO BALFOUR and HAMILTON in *The Mercury*, 12 July 1919, p. 6 and 23 October 1919, p. 8.
[152] MAIL SERVICE TO DOVER, in *Huon Times*, 9 December 1919, p. 2.
[153] *Zeehan and Dundas Herald*, 22 June 1920, p. 4 and 24 June 1920, p. 4.
[154] *The Mercury*, 13 August 1921, p. 6 and 13 January 1922, p. 3.
[155] Ibid., 30 December 1924, p. 5.
[156] Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand*, p. 57.

might situate the steady approach of Tasmanian government and society towards continuous improvement, within which stage-coach enterprises reflected and responded to the needs of the Tasmanian people, economy and environment.

The government's attempts to devolve responsibility for road maintenance and the associated consideration of how a small, impecunious population should pay for communications infrastructure resulted in poor quality roads. Remote regional development associated with mining exploration and exploitation similarly produced poor roads. As a consequence, passenger vehicles were selected to cater for the road conditions and lighter vehicles of American design often drawn by five horses supplanted the original, heavier English coaches.

Similarly, railways supplanted stage-coaches on the main routes, but horse-drawn vehicles delivered mail and passenger services on many branches. Railway companies entered the transport industry as its monopolist large business enterprises, and after the departure of Samuel Page, with the exception of perhaps the Spearman-Southerwood continuum in the north, stage-coach enterprises became local, free-settler, family-owned, small businesses, serving regional communities, along autonomous but coordinated sequential sectors. In that respect, the end of the stage-coach period resembled its origins.

Two main social development factors in the transition from penal colony to self-government affected stage-coach enterprises: increasing personal security produced available finance and time for leisure activities; and the involvement of civil society, particularly regarding intemperance and animal cruelty, changed the nature of stage-coach networks and placed their operations under greater public scrutiny. Stage-coach enterprises moved with the market and augmented their businesses with specials (to events) and excursions (for travel enjoyment) on top of their regular passenger transport services.

Societies, mechanics institutes, working men's clubs, and church groups swelled the family connections of the newly leisured class and permeated the networks of service providers and their customers. The small, community-based enterprises provided an appreciated public service often augmented by philanthropic contributions, and made travel, for business or pleasure, affordable to a growing, general public.

The stage-coach therefore did not cease to exist, but transitioned around the introduction of the railway on the main routes and, because of its lower cost and relative ubiquity and flexibility, continued to operate on scheduled branch line and excursion services. Eventually, the motor replaced the horse, the horse-changing stages and their inns became redundant, and the stage-coach became simply a coach, as in service today.

Reflecting upon the convict origins of the colony, Anthony Trollope remarked: 'The profuse expenditure of government money, and the use of what may be called slave labour, no doubt had a tendency to paralyse the energies of the settlers.' [157] While this sentiment somewhat supports Boyce's 'little changed' assertion, Appendix A identified 362 lines of stage-coach business activity from 1856 onwards. The settlers who operated these small, family, stage-coach enterprises faced arduous, daily challenges in a risky and complex financial, legal, managerial and operating environment. Those settlers were certainly not paralysed or lacking energy, and their services were integral to and perhaps even essential for the social development of Tasmania. Although not among the vital few, they were perhaps a necessary many. Nevertheless, historiographically their contributions seemed unnoticed and undervalued.

[157] Ibid., pp. 64-5.

PART 3 – TRANSITIONS

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

'Change' is the constant factor throughout this thesis. Speaking of American development, Jonathan Hughes said:

> our own economic progress, reflecting market forces, came from the efforts of all sorts of people in a changing world. Flexibility and mobility were crucial lubricants of growth in a changing technology impelled by the operation of the market economy.

Hughes' assessment can be exactly translated to the colonial situation of VDL/Tasmania. Hughes went on to quote Lenin's teacher, G.V. Plekhanov: 'change never takes place "by itself"; it always needs the intervention of *men*'.[1] Regardless of the size of their enterprises, the colonial stage-coach operators were agents of change and were drawn from 'all sorts of people', arguably even more diverse than Hughes' sample.

The nature of stage-coach service delivery perhaps lent itself to a form of invisibility. If the service was satisfactorily delivered, the customer gave no thought to the process (ways) behind its achievement: a stage-coach arrived, passengers dis/embarked and the vehicle departed, the process was assumed: it all just happened. The components of the capability (means) were known, even obvious, including from a research perspective. Yet the service did not 'just happen', change in the development of the passenger transport system did not take place 'by itself'; behind the improvements to the colonial communications system, government and private enterprise formulated business plans to achieve the desired ends.

In a nascent, remote colonial settlement, that communications system was important to mitigate hardships and enable governance and social development in the face of challenges summarised by Blainey's *Tyranny of Distance*. Wherever possible, the objectives of government and private enterprise needed to be aligned, and priorities coordinated. That requirement also was not achieved 'by itself'. From the

[1] Jonathan Hughes, *The Vital Few: American Economic Progress and its Protagonists* (New York, 1973), p. 14.

1820s, Lieutenant-Governor Arthur stated his policies (ends) during his annual address to the Legislative Council, introduced legislation to enact the policies, and allocated a budget (means) to departments (ways) to effect the outcomes. Private enterprises had to employ a similar approach.

Growth depended upon communication and communications systems, but the limited and fluctuating economy always strained the balance between government and private enterprise. Nevertheless, with security established after 1830, government prioritised communications by passing Post Office Acts and allocating a budget to a Post Office Department. The department had three areas of responsibility: viz for urban, inland and overseas mails. Carriage of the inland mails was to be contracted, the service was intended to become self-financing, and this was the service which presented business opportunities to mail and stage-coach enterprises.

If the Post Office facilitated the passage of information, and contracted vehicles carried the missives, adequate routes for the vehicles were necessary to complete the communications system. Accordingly, government, in limited conjunction with private enterprise, built roads and bridges, and ensured ferries were available where necessary.

Perhaps Lieutenant-Governor Denison best described the relationship between, and the priorities for, the government and private enterprise, when introducing a Bill to finance a government steam ferry from Hobart Town to Kangaroo Point 'by which a safe and ready communication will be maintained'.[2] In his 1850 address to the Legislative Council, he noted that:

> it may be said that such undertakings … would be better carried out by private enterprise than by Government agency … But under the present circumstances … it is not probable that individuals will be found willing to undertake a scheme of the kind upon the principle of low prices, - the only one … by which … to ensure the community the full benefit … I cannot think that any better appropriation of public money can be made than in carrying out such works for improving the means of communication.[3]

Denison's statement epitomised the consistent theme of colonial government policy with respect to communications: the primacy of private enterprise, the supporting role

---

[2] Lieutenant-Governor, Address to the Legislative Council, CC, 6 August 1850, *The Hobart Town Gazette*, 13 August 1850, p. 619.
[3] Ibid.

of government, and the responsibility of government to provide services, in the public interest, where business could or would not.

Regarding booming settler Anglophone colonies, James Belich spoke of 'cloning' from the parent and other colonies including the importation of institutions;[4] Richard White thought VDL 'the most English' of the colonies;[5] so it was perhaps unsurprising that the operation of the Post Office mostly followed English practice, legislation, and regulation. Mail-coaches operated on stages, whose length was determined by the need to change horses. At those staging points, inns provided the services, hence inn-keepers became an important part of the stage-coaching business. In England, turnpike trusts usually constructed the roads and recovered their costs through tolls, but in VDL, government had responsibility for road construction.

In the interest of public safety, government enacted measures to regulate vehicles, and their operations and areas, in three main categories, viz hawkers and carriers, hackney cabs, and stage-coaches. These might be simply summarised as regarding: the carriage of materiel; vehicle hire, within the two main towns; and the carriage of individual passengers.

Although the *Stage Coach Act (1836)*, which defined a stage-coach as a vehicle in which each passenger paid a separate fare, was the principal Act regulating the stage-coach enterprises, the operators were nevertheless constrained not to intrude upon the preserves of the other vehicle categories as defined: within their respective Acts; by subsequent amendments; with measures for enforcement under the *Police Act (1865)*; and, as horse operators, with successive Acts for the prevention of cruelty to animals. Stage-coach operators therefore had to be cognisant of, and comply with, a considerable body of law which directly affected their businesses.

However, a range of developing law also had a secondary effect upon their environment. If they were also innkeepers, they were governed by Acts concerning the sale of beer and spirits and the promotion of good order in public houses. Numerous bridge, ferry and roads Acts determined conditions for the use of the infrastructure and the rates of tolls, although these might be waived under certain

---

[4] James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: the Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-world, 1783-1939* (New York, 2009), pp. 165-69 and pp. 267-72.
[5] Richard White, *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity 1688-1980* (Sydney, 1981), p. 63.

circumstances associated with the carriage of government or contracted mail, or categories of passenger.

Legislation of the business environment was also developmental. For instance, many insolvent entrepreneurs were affected by changes to the law regarding conditions for supersession, absolute discharge, or the ability to continue, or later resume, trading. Other emerging legislation made entrepreneurs liable for goods in store or in transit. The *Stage Coach Act (1836)* made drivers criminally liable for negligence, and later developments in civil law made proprietors vicariously liable for damages assessed against their employees in the course of their duty.

Thus the stage-coach enterprises' civil and criminal legal framework was pervasive, complex and constantly changing. No business could operate effectively in that environment without a sound and current understanding and employment of the applicable law. However, neither could it succeed without an understanding of the market.

With a British population in 1835 of around 22 million and a VDL population of 35,250, no contemporary English example was appropriate with regard to the scale of the market; yet comparable fast coach routes produced almost identical enterprise size requirements for vehicles, horses and workforce. The point of business difference between England and VDL was the number of enterprises which the market could sustain; and more particularly, how many enterprises could viably service each route.

In VDL, only the New Norfolk-Hobart Town and Longford-Launceston catchments consistently supported more than one operator simultaneously; in origin, those routes were population driven. By contrast, the Hobart Town-Launceston route was spurred by a communications requirement, initially supported by Post Office subsidies, but was always problematic. Most VDL and later Tasmanian routes therefore were, or became, served by a single operator: *de facto* monopolies.

The colonial press consistently railed against any monopoly. Adam Smith had revised his earlier rational, theoretical, free-market sentiments after observing the selfish behaviour of entrepreneurs who had gained a market monopoly, which he declared 'a great enemy to good management';[6] yet in the limited scale of the VDL

[6] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (New York, 1994), p. 184.

market, monopoly was frequently the only sustainable business model. Neither was Smith's pessimist assertion that 'the price of monopoly is upon every occasion the highest which can be got',[7] necessarily the case in the colony.

His moral compass better situated the social condition. Describing man as created with 'an original desire to please, and an original aversion to offend his brethren', Smith believed man's actions were influenced by self-imposed restraints and by the need for social approval.[8] Although theoretically man needed no more than good health, a debt free condition and a clear conscience, he felt a need to be noticed, ie to be a man of character and some status; and for Smith, bettering one's condition in life was an important success factor. However, self-regulation would not always suffice, and there was a need for some intervention and enforcement on the part of civil society: ethics and jurisprudence were the useful parts of his moral philosophy.[9]

A modern interpretation might describe the philosophy as a combination of a values-based and a rules-based society. The difference between the Smithian and modern situations would lie in where the two societies were placed in the continuum, and the values that applied. In modern parlance, 'greed is good' is a business philosophy, western society is increasingly atheistic, and although electronically networked, modern society might be less connected than was achieved by the face-time and letter writing of the colonial entrepreneurs. Therefore, identifying the motivations, behaviours and effectiveness of the individuals who owned the colonial enterprises presents a major risk for modern observers, as does any assessment of what they might have considered as personal success.

Of the three monopolists on the main road, Mrs Cox and James Lord displayed a sense of propriety, and Samuel Page showed a desire for government and social approval. Furthermore, the monopolist Page was able to demonstrate a business case for the fares. In VDL therefore, Smith's philosophy about the behaviours of man in society was more appropriate than his blanket condemnation of monopoly. Even the colonial press provided somewhat balanced coverage, albeit via partisan newspapers on opposing sides. Monopoly might have been necessary, but, in colonial stage-coach enterprises, was not extreme. Stage-coaches were, after all, a public service delivered

---

[7] Ibid., p. 75.
[8] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1976), p. 116.
[9] Ibid., p. 45, p. 51 and p. 340.

by private enterprise, and there were many examples of benevolence by the colonial entrepreneurs, who in a Smithian moral fashion, subordinated their interest for the greater good.

The press's other concern was for visibility of the actions of government and its bureaucrats. The PMG's renegotiations of the mail contract outside the tender process attracted adverse publicity and insinuations that Mrs Cox was receiving an unfair benefit. The process was legal, and given the scale of the market probably achieved good value for government and was sustainable for Mrs Cox; but the press preferred conspiracy theories and accusations of jobbery. Admittedly, as with Dickens' 'Circumlocution Office', the PMG bureaucracy later exacerbated the situation through incompetence and authoritarianism.

Lack of attention to administrative detail surrounding Benjamin Hyrons' default on the mail contract, the failure to secure the bond, and James Lord's carriage of the mail without an effective contract, severely damaged the reputation of government. Although politicians sought to censure the responsible officers, the establishment circled to defend its own. The PMG then compounded his shame with his inflexible and unsympathetic treatment of Samuel Page, the entrepreneur who had come forward to rescue government from its failed delivery of communications services; but from a government and bureaucratic perspective, worse was to come.

In an effort to circumvent the island's stage-coach entrepreneurs, government actively canvassed tenders from the mainland, and in so doing prompted press accusations of excess concerning the PMG/Colonial Treasurer's personal travel. The lack of visibility of the process, which awarded the mail contract to William Brown, provoked suggestions of bribery, nepotism and venality. Brown's subsequent and swift default implied the Tasmanian government had been naïve in its dealings with the Victorian entrepreneurs. Brown and his backer were also embroiled in accusations of jobbing mail tenders in Victoria, which they tried to explain away as sub-contracting.

Even so, government persisted with its efforts to thwart local entrepreneurs (and hence monopoly) by attracting bids from the mainland and awarded a contract to Robertson Wagner & Co. On that occasion the contractor did not commence operations, but sold the contract on to Samuel Page. Nevertheless, government

shrugged off embarrassment. It had achieved the contract at the lowest possible tender price, and if the entrepreneurs were involved in jobbing the contract that was their concern. In that instance, government allowed its short-term budget interest to out-weigh its more strategic communications service provision responsibility, and relied on the limited private sector to deliver and sustain the capability.

How then were the stage-coach enterprises best to structure themselves to provide the service? In the English example, mail-coaches represented only about 10 per cent of the stage-coach total, but all used the same business model, viz coach-builders owned and maintained the vehicles, which they contracted out. In the Post Office case, one prime contractor held the mail contracts and sub-contracted to the operators; stage-coach operators contracted directly with a coach-builder, one of whom owned 250 coaches, covering 20,000 miles per day, without any written contract. On the road, enterprises consisted of a hierarchy of operators, individually or in partnership, in association with inn-keepers and horse providers. Again, scale was incomparable, but enterprise structure was instructive.

In VDL, the size of the market and the transitioning penal colony nature of its society discouraged coach-builders from carrying the capital risk invested in coaches, and operators therefore owned their vehicles. Enterprises had a range of business structure options including: full individual or company ownership, partnership, consortia or associations, with formal contracting or informal arrangements for service provision. No colonial enterprise matched the size of the large English concerns, but within the island the Hobart Town-Launceston route defined the largest single route enterprise. Other than that route and later multi-route enterprises based upon Launceston, stage-coach enterprises in the colony were small to medium, usually family, businesses.

They were also numerous. An examination of Appendix B shows over 300 stage-coach entrepreneurs, of whom only about half-a-dozen were not in the small to medium family business category. Appendix A includes some enterprises whose proprietors could not be found in print, indicating the list is incomplete, lacking those very small enterprises which did not advertise or come to public attention. Thus the overwhelming majority of operators were small, providing everyday services in an ordinary manner. Who were these ordinary people?

In the transitioning penal colony, the entrepreneurs were drawn from three broad categories: former convicts; those born free in the colony; and free settlers who arrived in the 1820s; the latter two might be described as always free. Free settlers were the major entrepreneurs on the main road and their business model was family ownership. The only exception to this was the former convict consortium raised around the *Comet* enterprise, which failed through undercapitalisation, weak business skills, excessive complexity, too many associates, and probably a lack of trust among former convicts. Many of these reasons also accounted for the failure of a mixed convict/free group to successfully take over the consortium model.

A few entrepreneurs, not always free, were able to run small enterprises by limiting their scale (urban omnibus enterprises provided the best examples of this case); and Benjamin Hyrons was an adaptive survivor who attempted to operate a large enterprise, but repeatedly fell back into the lesser categories in order to avoid the insolvency which befell so many of his former convict contemporaries.

Hyrons also exemplified the intra-enterprise spreading of financial risk by cross-subsidy and diversification. Squires' compartmented attempt to sequentially describe Hyrons' separate business activities illustrated the complexity of the arrangements, but also how observers failed to understand that these were interconnected, not stand-alone elements.[10] Hyrons did not transfer from one activity to another; instead, he shifted emphasis between parts of his enterprise to accommodate changing economic circumstance. Hyrons however, was a fraudulent soft criminal with better business skills than his fellows, and the stage-coach roles of former convicts, with the exception of the intra-urban omnibus originators, were predominantly as members of the workforce, not as entrepreneurs.

However, workforce selection by skillsets might not have been as random as some believed. While Moore's suggestion, that colonial supply and demand requirements drove transportation more so than English crime rates was conjectural,[11] muster information gained on arrival was comprehensive; and that so many stage-coach associated workers and small entrepreneurs had prior horse, coach operating or

---

[10] G. Squires, 'Benjamin Hyrons: Shoemaker, convict, storekeeper, innkeeper and stage coach proprietor', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, vol. 24 (1977), pp. 66-76.
[11] James F.H. Moore, *The convicts of Van Diemen's Land* (Hobart, 1976), p. 43.

coach-building experience suggests an organisational push as well as a gravitational pull.

Thus, within the imported notion of middle- to lower-middle class, which encompassed the stage-coach industry, an always free/former convict divide further complicated the social hierarchy; but even the lower order had skills worthy of respect. As in England, coachmen in particular enjoyed considerable status, putatively as worker aristocracy, and in turn, this class division determined the levels of respective networks.

Perhaps the best example of international networks was that of the coachbuilders who were able to call upon English suppliers for components or designs. The Collinge's patent axle often featured in colonial advertising, yet the patent applied neither geographically nor was it still in force.[12] However, it implied the latest technical innovation and therefore safety, and reflected contemporary advertisements in England. The international networks ensured the local industry was up-to-date with developments, fashion, usage and equipment.

Within the colony, the one network which all stage-coach entrepreneurs seemed to share and which transcended social class embraced the horse. Entrepreneurs and their workforce were vitally involved in horse breeding and stock development, but the interest was carried further into racing. In the 1850s-1870s as in England, 'there was an enormous increase in the popularity of the turf,'[13] which spurred both the enterprises and their passenger market. Eventually, horses became a colonial industry, within which stage-coach enterprises were customers and owners; but a speed-obsessed, racing, gambling, risky, win-lose mentality explained the dangerous practices on the road and the commercial suicide of some businesses.

Other business and social networks were more selective. James Lord, with his English education, moved in the highest establishment circles, perhaps reflecting a colonial version of a Victorian class 'who, regardless of social, ethnic or religious origin, were all part of the same club'.[14] Auctions and licensing days provided general

---

[12] Statute of Monopolies (1624), 21 James I c3, s6, see Stephen van Dulken, *British Patents of Invention, 1617-1977: a guide for researchers* (London, 1999), p. 2, p. 8 and p. 23.
[13] A.N. Wilson, *The Victorians* (London, 2002), p. 409.
[14] Ibid., p. 274.

venues and opportunities for business discussions, and membership of religious groups or the mechanics institute offered more local networks. However, organisations such as the Oddfellows or Freemasons permeated the enterprises but were less transparent.

Within the stage-coach enterprises, Joseph Fisher, William Ellis, Alfred Burbury and Benjamin Hyrons were Freemasons. Fisher was transported for machine-breaking, as was Alfred Burbury's father, who had been employed as a convict policeman after arrival. In England, there was official suspicion of the sympathies of associations such as the masons and their links with radicalism. When the Burbury faction damaged Samuel Page's vehicles, a convict policeman from a machine-breaking county investigated, and lightly dismissed the matter.

At one level, the incident suggested networks of former convicts and especially convict policemen, machine-breakers and sympathisers, radical associations, or based upon (industrialising) county of origin. Although the sample was small, it was proportionally significant, and even if a coincidence, it might indicate deeper linkages, as no statistical analysis of convicts has yet examined their networks or loyalties in such a way.

At another level, the nature of small communities was a factor. Regarding Chartism in England, Clapham believed it:

> needed the small communities, the slack religious and moral supervision, the unpoliced street and meeting place. The control which such communities could exercise over shopkeepers, constables, schoolteachers, local preachers, and even Poor Law guardians was greater then anything that could take place in the cities or rural villages.[15]

This description, transposed to Tasmania, well described the social condition necessary to permit the behaviour of the Oatlands mob during the competition between Alfred Burbury and Samuel Page, and reinforced Adam Smith's belief in the need for jurisprudence when ethics failed to exert a restraint.

Of course, family provided the most significant network. Family businesses shared a personal interest in long-term security. As in England, intermarriage helped to ensure cooperation on the road or expand the business. The role of the wife in the

[15] J.H. Clapham, 'The Early Railway Age 1820-1850' (Cambridge, 1950), p. 73, in ibid., p. 45.

enterprise was very considerable, but little recorded; and the less visible, supporting tasks undertaken by children reduced the cost of business and provided a kind of apprenticeship.

Alan Atkinson spoke of the domestic, intrinsic power of women and of women's civilising effect on society;[16] in the stage-coach enterprises women undoubtedly exercised administrative and organisational power, and convicts assigned to their free, *entrepreneuses* wives were successfully rehabilitated. Furthermore, in his earlier work on women publicans in NSW in 1838, Atkinson, while acknowledging the relative invisibility of the wife in the inn-keeping business, showed several examples where a wife's contribution ranged from being an asset to being essential.[17]

Small, family-owned enterprises, serving branch routes or segments, usually with the local mail contract, became the preponderant business model through the 19th and into the 20th century. Such numerous, private enterprise, service providers were integral parts of the communications system and valued members of local communities: respected, even essential, but ordinary and unless something went wrong, unnoticed.

The stage-coach enterprises therefore sought viability in an environment regulated by government, constrained by competition, influenced by networks, limited by available capital or credit, and subject to the vagaries of a developing colony and economic uncertainty. The capabilities and best intentions of government and entrepreneurs could not always manage the circumstances. As Atkinson remarked: 'Planning and idealism were compromised over and over again by unforeseen change.'[18] Evident energy and enthusiasm were similarly not always sufficient.

Strategic planners attempt to anticipate shocks and discontinuities. In the case of the stage-coach enterprises, the key discontinuity was not brought about by steam-power, the electric telegraph or the railway, but by the introduction of the internal combustion engine; and although there were several recessions in the colonial period, the most critical shock was the inflation spike caused by the Victorian gold-rush of

---

[16] Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: Democracy*, vol. 2 (South Melbourne, 2004), p. xvi.
[17] Alan Atkinson, 'Women Publicans in 1838', *Push from the Bush*, vol. 8 (1980), p. 94.
[18] Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: Democracy*, p. xiii.

1853. Samuel Page's default on the mail contract in that circumstance highlighted the critical vulnerability of a fast stage-coach enterprise and further explained the drive for monopoly.

Although factors such as competition on the road, an unmanageable convict workforce, fraud and theft throughout his supply chain, and an adversarial relationship with the PMG were contributory, it was the near tripling of the cost of fodder caused by its export to Victoria, which caused him to exit the business. The pre-shock cost of providing fodder amounted to around 64 per cent of the enterprise's budget, and although he had earlier targeted the fodder supply of a competitor, he had not made adequate provision to ensure his own supply before prices escalated. Stage-coaching was a logistic industry, which was itself dependent on logistics; fodder was the key enabler, major cost and critical vulnerability.

James Lord was able to take over the route because, as a considerable and well-located horse and landowner, he could offset the inflationary cost from within his own resources. Thus, if ultimately possession of the mail contract was necessary for a horizontal monopoly on the road, a logistic/fodder supply integral to the enterprise (ie a vertical monopoly) was essential to remove vulnerability to third-party suppliers or fluctuations in the market. Page learned the lesson, acquired the capability and returned to use it against William Brown. To a lesser extent, the vertical monopoly approach also applied to other enablers of large enterprises, such as the inns.

Having integral enablers, also allowed the business to cross-subsidise between profitable and loss-making elements either seasonally, or during periods of competition or economic stress. However, a vertical monopoly increased the difficulty in determining the proportion of effort, value and cost attributable to the strictly stage-coach element of the enterprise, although analysis of the colonial and English markets strongly indicated that stage-coaching as a stand-alone venture was insufficient to deliver a profit.

Analysis of annual operating costs within a fast stage-coach business showed that as much as 85 per cent of the total went to feed and shoeing, annualised capital investment in horses was around 12 per cent, and vehicles and their maintenance accounted for less than three per cent. Samuel Page's annual costs during the 1853

inflation spike were over £12,000 pa, but a steady state figure probably still amounted to £6000 pa. At £3 inside and £2 outside, Mrs Cox needed a load factor (with the right mix) of 33⅓ per cent every day to break even, and her decision not to run on Sundays cost her £1508 pa. Yet on some days, services ran empty. Price cutting competition was unsustainable and monopolism was understandable if not commercially essential.

Some idea of the size and scale of the stage-coach industry might be gauged from its contribution to, and comparison with, the island's economy. A very conservative estimate of economic activity associated with mail coaches (ie not including stage-coaches) showed it was the equivalent of 75 per cent of government expenditure and employed about five per cent of the working age (non-convict) population. Opposition enterprises and others not holding mail contracts would have increased these proportions.

By the same rationale, horses physically in service on the mail-coaches would have amounted to more than six per cent of the island's total horse population and consumed fodder to a value equivalent to half the colonial government's expenditure or more than half the value of the island's oat and wheat exports. The value of those horses was more than twice the value of the island's horse exports. Such was the scale of their tangible economic importance.

Other value delivered to the colony was less tangible. The government made a profit by contracting the inland mails and the contractors carried newspapers free of charge. Tangible value was therefore at least equivalent to the cost of the contracts but the collateral benefits for communications and social inclusion, although certain, were less quantifiable. Similar, difficult to measure benefits were obtained through skills development within the workforce, the part played by the industry in the rehabilitation of convicts, and the improved social capital derived from the provision of a public transport and communications service.

However, there was little scope for the stage-coach industry to grow without an increase in the market, and the limited pastoral and agricultural areas upon which the colonial economy was based, did not bode well for such an enlargement. Instead, it was the discovery of minerals which opened up new areas and introduced new populations and further business requirements; but timing played a part in the responses to the discoveries with effect from the early 1850s.

The island transitioned from a penal to a self-governing colony, to be known as Tasmania, and transportation ceased. Newitt reported that in 1854 only 17 convicts were employed on the main road.[19] The new administration attempted to devolve responsibility for road construction to numerous small road trusts, each of which had an uncertain and limited budget, and although the intent was commendable, the resultant organisation lacked unity and simplicity. The loss of the convict road gangs and the need for multiple trusts to finance and contract for road works produced an inefficient system, which constructed few roads and those were of poor quality.

Thus, mining brought settlement into new areas, and population growth presented opportunities for new stage-coach enterprises, much as had been the case in the early development of the industry; however, the practical difference was that in the earlier development, government provided good road surfaces, which enabled English coaches to be used. In the latter case, road surfaces were poor, and therefore lighter-weight coaches of American design were increasingly introduced, usually hauled by five horses (three leaders line-abreast) in case of bogging or injury to a horse.

Of course, mining almost inevitably required the introduction of railways, whose primary purpose was the carriage of materiel; but the scale of investment and the intervention of government when railway enterprises failed, meant that rail replaced stage-coaches on main routes, where they also took over the mail contracts, as well as carrying some passengers and parcels. Stage-coaches were relegated to provide branch services, or to settlements bypassed by the railway, or to areas which were commercially unsuited to the large infrastructure costs of railway construction. Railway companies became (government owned/subsidised) monopolies on the main routes, but the ubiquity of stage-coaches ensured their continued use as small enterprises elsewhere.

Another opportunity, which expanded the market was the developing tourism industry. Entrepreneurs increasingly coordinated the services of steamers, ferries, railways and stage-coaches to meet the needs of local and inter-colonial visitors, which required a more sophisticated approach to publicity and advertising. From a

---

[19] Lyn Newitt, Alan Jones, and Tasmanian Department of Main Roads Historical Committee, *Convicts & carriageways: Tasmanian road development until 1880* (Hobart, 1988), p. 150.

business perspective, tourism presented a seasonal challenge requiring a flexible approach to routes, schedules, capacity, fares and competitive incentives, and was another reason to diversify the business to minimise risk or cross-subsidise the enterprise.

Urban hackney cabs also serviced the tourists, and to a lesser extent so did the urban/suburban omnibuses. However, the buses' primary market was the everyday passenger in the main towns but as those passengers paid individual fares, the omnibuses operated under the *Stage Coach Act*. The Cooleys coordinated their omnibuses into the broader Hobart passenger transport industry, where Alfred Burbury resorted to operating omnibuses (long) after his bankruptcy; and in the north Henry Spearman ran the last horse-drawn omnibus in Launceston before electrification. From a diversified business perspective, both the Spearman family and W.J. Southerwood combined omnibuses with mail and stage-coach operations, livery stables and vehicle hire in integrated passenger transport and logistics enterprises. Southerwood was arguably the last of the large stage-coach entrepreneurs, and he went on to motorise his services.

What then did it take to be a successful colonial stage-coach entrepreneur? The first consideration might be what constituted success. From an 'ends, ways and means' perspective, the minimum level outcome was the avoidance of insolvency, which many enterprises failed to achieve. Small business entrepreneurs, often with poor business skills and from a convict background or attempting to transition from coachman to operator, formed the majority of the insolvents. However, better capitalised enterprises involved in larger consortiums, but again with some convict origins or associations also failed, usually through over-extension or too rapid development. Even longevity, a free-settler family background in the industry, and with good networks, was not a sufficient antidote, as Samuel Page junior, and subsequently his wife, were to prove.

Adam Smith added the approbation of others to his basic debt free and clear conscience measure of success, and Wilson remarked that Pickwick had 'achieved what all enterprising Victorians aimed for – financial independence'.[20] Therefore, if wealth creation were the criterion, free settler Samuel Page was the most successful,

[20] Wilson, *The Victorians*, pp. 20-21.

although he too came perilously close to failure had he not been sufficiently rational to exit stage-coaching for a period to recover and regroup. His breakdown of costs showed he had a thorough business understanding, but his wealth was not generated by his stage-coach operations. Rather, he acquired property, land and livestock in part to offset his operating costs.

Also, if establishing an enduring family business, or indeed a landed dynasty was one of his aims, despite a comprehensive and cautious will, his wealth and family influence did not survive much beyond the next generation. Reflecting Dickens' *Jarndyce vs Jarndyce* scenario,[21] Samuel Page's will probably served best to enrich the pockets of the lawyers. Page's descendants 'didn't realise how much easier it is to live within an income than without it',[22] and so Samuel's caution was probably well-founded. However, Page never really achieved Smith's approbation criterion and one suspects he would not be satisfied with that outcome.

If delivering a public service, within sensible commercial constraints, was the desired successful end, Mary Ann Cox was the most meritorious of the entrepreneurs. Also, if pioneering were a measure of success, she brought the inland mail system through to maturity, and developed the colonial model for her successors to follow. Her accumulated wealth did not approach that of Samuel Page, but her reputation might have been her most important personal criterion, and she, unaided, provided well for her children, who were more prudent than Page's.

James Lord also demonstrated public service as an end, and was perhaps the most beneficent of the entrepreneurs towards his workers. However, as Smith considered that benevolence should come at some cost to the actor, Lord's claim for personal recognition might be lessened, as he achieved his outcomes from a more comfortable base that those of his competitors. The entrepreneurs therefore had different objectives, which transcended business ends: success was a personal matter and dependent upon personality.

Some factors were, however, common for success, or at least for a smoother business environment. The most important of these was a good relationship with government and the bureaucracy, and in this, Mrs Cox proved the most adept,

---

[21] Charles Dickens, *Bleak House*, (New York, 1868), p. 818.
[22] A.W. Burbury, *Chronicles of the Burbury Family in Tasmania and England*, (Austin's Ferry, Tas., 1939), p. 51.

although the government needed her flexibility and support, perhaps more than she needed their business at the time. James Lord also enjoyed government favour, again from a position of some comparative strength. However, the bureaucracy knew Samuel Page wanted official approval, and thus he suffered a comparative lack of positional power in which 'ends, ways and means' were subordinated to the needs and weaknesses of personal politics. Lastly, in the case of Benjamin Hyrons, although he enjoyed popularity with the press and public, his relationship with government was usually adversarial.

Extensive networks were important to business success, but trust within and between networks and associations was essential. Samuel Page highlighted the fraud and theft throughout his supply chain, which he seemed unable to manage. A former-convict workforce almost ensured pilfering was an expected loss to be factored into financial planning, and there were several examples of former convicts exploiting or cheating their confreres and families within or between enterprises. A convict/free divide affected the businesses both internally and externally, but a colonial social hierarchical divide further overlaid the industry, limiting trust and business confidence, which unsurprisingly therefore, resided mainly within established social and family groups. Any verbal agreements, such as in England, would have been fraught with risk in the colonial situation.

If unpredictability were a theme of colonial development,[23] then the most successful entrepreneurs would have been those best able to foresee, adapt and diversify. In a sense, successful colonial enterprises did that by cross-subsidies between elements of their broader business interests, and by establishing vertical monopolies, which enabled them to manage change by insulating themselves against fluctuating supply costs. However, having established monopolies, the entrepreneurs needed the skills to manage their reputations. John Pascoe Fawkner and Benjamin Hyrons used notions of monopoly and suggestions of implied government patronage to portray themselves as victims, or champions of the poor; Mrs Cox, usually through her agent, successfully minimised the damage; James Lord implied, as the saviour of the mail contract, monopoly had been thrust upon him; but Samuel Page carried a reputation as a monopolist to his grave.

---

[23] Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: Democracy*, p. xiii.

These characteristics for success have necessarily been drawn from the few entrepreneurs about whom some detail could be found, ie the proprietors of large enterprises. However, large (by colonial standards) enterprises numbered only about ten, whereas there were over 300 small to medium enterprises (see Appendix B), and while the foregoing characteristics were applicable to the whole, they were not in equal proportion. Another disproportionate aspect was that although the industry was workforce intensive, labour accounted for only a fraction of total business costs; yet the difficult labour force would have consumed much of the time, and challenged the management skills of the entrepreneurs.

Small enterprises were likely to be less well capitalised and connected, and more vulnerable to market fluctuations, and although somewhat a generalisation, the entrepreneurs, particularly those also operating as inn-keepers, seemed more prone than the larger operators to risks induced by drinking, gambling, dubious speculations, borrowing and poor judgment. For instance, a common approach among new licensees was the holding of ordinaries, at which no, or little charge was made for food and drink. As a way of creating goodwill, the ordinary was very successful; as a means of bringing in revenue, it was singularly poor; together, these ways and means produced a certain end, ie insolvency.

Such then were some of the many types that populated the emerging transport and communications system, which in turn served a developing society, of which the stage-coach community was itself a part. That changing society, as the customer base, provided new business opportunities for the entrepreneurs beyond those dependent on population growth. Improvements in the island's economy and individual conditions of employment increased personal disposable income and introduced time for leisure or recreation. These conditions offered further transport service opportunities, especially for local enterprises.

The stage-coach pattern of regular passenger transport on defined routes with set schedules had long been supplemented in England by specials and excursions to traditional events or recreations, such as county shows or the seaside. Specials were run in VDL to auctions, sales, and more especially to race meetings, from the outset, but developing prosperity broadened the demand for tourism, recreation and other leisure activities. Stage-coach enterprises became part of the social fabric of the

island; indeed, many developing practices and activities would not have been possible without their enabling support.

Small, regional family enterprises were in and of their local communities. They reduced the effects of remoteness through the branch mail contract, parcel deliveries, running specials for school and sports teams, musical groups and bands, dances, public meetings and concerts, or excursions for church and other groups for picnics. They were usually sole suppliers, but not monopolists in the pejorative sense; often, as members of the community, they made philanthropic contributions in kind (publicly acknowledged as '*gratis*' or '*pro bono*') and in that respect provided an altruistic service. In terms of success therefore, local reputation was, for them, a key end, much as character was important for Mrs Cox and Samuel Page.

Further local community involvement was also a product of the government's efforts towards devolution. Regardless of their effectiveness, the road trusts, through direct responsibility, focused local attention on infrastructure development and empowered the community to challenge the bureaucracy, often through the press. While government's objective was primarily user pays, one collateral, default effect was local self-help and community building.

Attitudes also changed affecting the nature of the market and the conduct of business. A developing civil society increased public attention toward, and attitudes concerning, drunkenness and cruelty to animals, both of which directly affected the stage-coach enterprises. Coffee Palaces and family hotels supplemented or substituted for existing inns, temperance groups served coffee en route as an alternative to grog, and the SPCA ensured public scrutiny of the condition of horses. These changes introduced additional measures for the entrepreneurs to manage and changed the shape of the market with regard to differentiation of customer service.

Improvements in quality of service and experience were another factor affecting the competition to attract a share of local or inter-colonial travellers. Hotels sought to emulate the fine premises of Melbourne, and a cooperative travel system developed between different elements of the industry. For instance, stage-coaches might convey passengers to and from a steamer for an excursion during which an entertainment and refreshments were provided. An ever-deeper segment of society sought and enjoyed increasingly civilised and sophisticated activities, and the

entrepreneurs demonstrated great confidence and energy in developing the essential supporting services.

The convict portion of society progressively reduced, and although former convicts lingered long in the workforce and omnibus enterprises, entrepreneurs were otherwise drawn from the always free. As well as the desire to expunge the convict stain, the comparatively poor, free-settler entrepreneurs joined in the broader desire to gentrify their ancestry. By the end of three generations, George Page had acquired the rank of captain; James Lord became descended from well-to-do Yorkshire yeomen and had had no business partnership with the convict Benjamin Hyrons; the Burburys claimed descendency from the officer class; and military hero status from fighting at Waterloo was also a desirable entry in the pedigree. By the end of the century, myth entered selectively into the record to confer status and respectability; questions were not asked.

Samuel Page clearly valued the words 'Royal Mail'. In England, Post Office employees had to take an oath before a Justice of the Peace not to tamper with the mail and to maintain 'secrecy in all things'.[24] Colonial Post Office directives restricted the position of postmaster to trusted persons such as schoolmasters, and especially in a local community, the position conferred respectability and status. Post Office employees had a kind of official position within society, and carriage of the mail implied a similar trust, responsibility and concept of service. In England, clerks in Post Office employment were largely drawn from the daughters of ministers and schoolmasters,[25] the same category of persons required by the colonial directives, again defining a particular band within the social hierarchy.

That women played more than a supporting role in stage-coach enterprises was demonstrated by colonial experience, as well as by English precedent. Mrs Cox in particular commanded the respect and attention of government. Women were managers within the family enterprises, while their husbands conducted the operations. Furthermore, they enjoyed respect and network contacts in their own right; women very successfully conducted enterprises after the loss of a husband, perhaps further indicating the real balance of responsibility within the business.

---

[24] Flora Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford* (London, 2009), p. 382.
[25] Ibid., p. 390.

In discussing 'an age of system', Alan Atkinson (as already noted) wondered whether the power women knew best was 'intrinsic to family and household'.[26] If so, that would further explain their suitability for and success within family business and hospitality type enterprises. Yet Mrs Cox went beyond this and actively engaged government in the development of the VDL postal and communications system. Mrs Cox was much more than an exception that proved the rule.

Another rule of stage-coach enterprises was the role of personalities in the face of complexity and change. In the small scale of the colonial experience, individuals, whether men or women, could have disproportionate effect. Zoë Laidlaw described the 19th century as the peak of 'the distinctive dynamism of Anglophone settler colonization';[27] stage-coach entrepreneurs demonstrated precisely that mix of energy and confidence.

Histories of stage-coaching have tended to be technical or popular accounts, rather than legal, economic or social analyses, yet those constantly changing factors complicated the business environment. Although the colonial example could draw upon English experience for enterprise size and rates of effort, comparisons of market scale were not valid and the colonial situation required building from nothing. The colonial entrepreneur therefore faced uncertainty and complexity in a pioneering situation.

Ultimately, the most common factor leading to enterprise failure was excessive and unmanageable complexity within the business structure along with undercapitalisation (ways and means). The key ingredients for success were unity within the organisation, people with ability and courage, and networks with trust. In a transitioning penal colony, the latter were a rare commodity.

The people who established and developed the enterprises were ambitious, but ordinary, and their enterprises provided everyday services, which became part of the fabric of colonial society. That they did so effectively, perhaps explained their historical, relative invisibility – they created the perception that it all just happened. They were a class of small family business operators with a respected place in society trying to get ahead, as such of no particular interest.

---

[26] Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: Democracy*, p. xvi.
[27] Zoë Laidlaw, 'Breaking Britannia's Bounds? Law, Settlers, and Space in Britain's Imperial Historiography', *The Historical Journal*, vol. 55, no. 3 (2012), p. 829.

Therefore, as no historian has chosen to recognise the contribution of this stratum of society, perhaps it should be left to George Eliot:

> for the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs. *George Eliot (1872)*[28]

[28] George Eliot, *Middlemarch* (New York, 1992), p. 799.

APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF ENTERPRISES

Date	Entrepreneur	Location/route	Remarks
1826	Martin, J	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	Van
1829	Glover, Charles	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	Curricle
1830	Roberts, James	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Reliance (1832)*
1831	Lowe, G	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Eclipse,* Lowe & Mills, 4h
1831	Mills, P	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Eclipse,* Lowe & Mills, 4h
1831	Presnell, William	Black Snake/Hobart Town	
1831	Webb, John	Hobart Town/Launceston	Imported two omnibuses, did not start, d1831
1832	Cooling, Robert	Kangaroo Point/Richmond/Sorell	
1832	Couling, Robert	Launceston/Perth	
1832	Nickolls, Henry	Hobart Town/Launceston	Mail cart
1832	Cox, John Edward	Hobart Town/Launceston	*Diligence* (1834) d 1837
1832	Cox, Mary Ann	Hobart Town/Launceston	
1832	Dixon	Fox Inn/Hobart Town	Dixon & Co, Omnibus
1832	Fawkner, John Pascoe	Launceston/Perth	
1832	Parker, John	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Fairplay*
1832	Wise, G	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	G. Wise, P. Mills & Co, *Eclipse, Tally-Ho*
1833		Green Ponds/Green Point Ferry	*Royal Oak Inn*/Mr Murdoch's
1833	Austin, Josiah	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	Austin & Baker, J & S Austin, *Fairplay*
1833	Austin, Solomon	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	Austin & Baker, J & S Austin, *Fairplay*
1833	Baker, Charles	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	Austin & Baker, *Eclipse*
1833	Robinson, George William	Black Snake/Hobart Town	Omnibus
1834		Kangaroo Point/Richmond	
1834	Fawkner, John Pascoe	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*The Independent*
1834	Cox, John Edward	Launceston/Perth/Longford	
1834	Austen, J	Black Snake/Hobart Town	Messrs Mills & J. Austen
1834	Brodie, George Sinclair	Hobart Town/Launceston	Brodie & Cutts, *Wasp* (1837)
1834	Collins, James, and Robinson, G.W	Hamilton/Hobart Town	
1834	Cutts, William	Hobart Town/Launceston	Brodie & Cutts,*Wasp* (1837)
1835	Austin, James		*Telegraph*
1835	Baker, Charles	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	Baker & Bridger
1835	Bridger, Henry	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	Baker & Bridger
1835	Collins, James	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Truth and Day*
1835	Mills, George	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Perseverance* (1844)
1835	Moore, Joseph	Launceston/*Grazier's Delight*	*Perseverance*, connect to Perth
1835	Ruffin, Richard	Perth/Launceston	
1836	Bridger, Henry	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	New Norfolk Coaches icw J & J Austin & Baker
1838	Chiene,Walter Glas	Hobart Town/Launceston	Mail coach, d 1841
1838	Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Morning Star*
1839	Cutts, William	Hobart/Green Ponds	Seasonal, *Wasp*
1839	Hart, Goodman	Launceston/Perth/Longford	Partnership with Hyrons
1839	Johnston, James	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Union, Prince Albert*
1839	Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/George Town	
1840	Gray	Richmond/Risdon	Messrs Cutts & Gray's
1840	Hyrons, Benjamin	Hobart Town/Launceston	*Young Queen*, delivery?
1840	Ruffin, Richard	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Fair Play*
1840	Strong, James	Hobart Town/Launceston	not RPT
1841	Johnston, James	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Prince Albert*
1841	Davis, John	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Regulator*
1842	Anderson, John	Oatlands/Green Ponds	*Jolly Nose*
1843	Dodge, Ralph	Richmond/Hobart Town	
1844	Barton, William	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Union*
1844	Hyrons, Benjamin	Hobart/Launceston	*Dispatch, Comet, New Comet*
1844	Martin, William Fox	Richmond/Hobart Town	*Despatch*
1845	O'Donnell, Daniel	Westbury/Launceston	*Industry*
1845	Bridges, John	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Victoria, Wonder*
1845	Johnson, John	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Industry*
1845	Martin, J	Richmond/Hobart Town	*Tasmanian*
1845	Olive, John	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Victoria*
1845	Olive, John	Oatlands/Hobart Town	*Victoria*
1845	Veitch	Launceston/Perth	
1845	Mills, J	Evandale/Launceston	

1845	Davis, John (?)	Richmond/Pontville	connection at *Castle Inn*
1845	Davis, John (?)	Broad Marsh/Pontville	connection at *Castle Inn*
1845	Earswell, Henry	Deloraine/Westbury/Launceston	
1846	Cooper, Edward	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Cooper & Co, Victoria*
1846	Petty, William	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Cooper & Co, Victoria*
1846	Ellis, W.H.	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	W.H. Ellis & Co, *Regulator*
1846		New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Tasman*
1846	Fisher, Joseph	Brown's River/Hobart Town	*Telegraph, Pic-nic*
1846	O'Donnell, Daniel	Westbury/Launceston	*Wonder*
1846	Morrison, John	Evandale/Launceston	*Morrison's Conveyance*
1846	O'Donnell, Daniel	Evandale/Launceston	*Wonder*
1846	Dodery, William	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Wonder*
1846	O'Donnell, Daniel	Deloraine/Launceston	
1846	Thompson, W.J.	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine	*Perseverance*
1846	Atkinson, Francis	Richmond	Insolvent 1847
1847	Petty, William	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Regulator*
1847	Davis, John	Hobart Town/Launceston	Partner in Comet Co
1847	Bridges, John	Green Ponds/Bridgewater	*Steam Boat Regulator Coach*
1847	Greenbank, Edward	Hobart Town/Launceston	*Comet Coaches*
1847	Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Original Comet*
1847	Solomon, David	Launceston/Perth/Longford	
1847	Solomon, David	Bishopsbourne/Longford	*Wonder*
1847	Cotham, Lawrence	Richmond/Hobart Town	*Tasmanian*
1847	Ellis, W.H.	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Regulator*
1848	Page, Samuel	Oatlands/Hobart Town	*Comet*
1848	Brooker, Mark	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	
1848	Solomon, David	Evandale/Launceston	*Wonder*
1848	Farrant, William	Campbell Town/Launceston	
1848	Greenbank, Edward	Launceston/Campbell Town	
1848	Farrant, William	Launceston/Oatlands	
1848	Messrs Page, Farrant & Greenbank	Launceston/Hobart Town	did not start
1848	Cotham, Lawrence	Richmond/Hobart Town	*Tasmanian, Omnibus*
1848	Martin	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	
1848	Page, Samuel	Oatlands/Hobart Town	*Comet*
1848	Watson, George	Westbury/Launceston	
1848	Page, Samuel	Hobart Town/Launceston	*Comet*
1848	Motton, William	Launceston/Westbury	*Morning Star*
1849	Solomon, David	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Teazer, Terror*
1849	Mills, George	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Perseverance ('again'), d 1849*
1849	Mills, Mahala	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	widow of George Mills
1849	Mills, Mahala	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Perseverance*
1849	Cotham, Lawrence	Sorell/Richmond/Hobart Town	*Royal Tasmanian*
1849	Cooley, Thomas Todd	Green Ponds	Omnibus, special
1849	Marshall, Benjamin	Oatlands/Launceston	license
1850	Joyce, Joseph	Launceston/Perth/Longford	license
1850	Dormer, William	(Ross) Oatlands/?	license
1850	Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Comet No 2*
1850	Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/Hobart Town	*Diligence*
1850	Blackwell, Samuel	Green Ponds/Bothwell	
1850	Edwards, James	Launceston/Pleasant Hills (Devon)	
1850	Hamilton, Henry	Launceston/Hobart Town	(Campbell Town)
1850	Douglas, Roddam H.	Deloraine/Westbury	
1851	Douglas, Roddam H.	Westbury/Carrick/Launceston	*The Age*
1851	Baker, R.	Westbury/Deloraine	*Rover*
1851	Hyrons, John	Launceston/Perth/Longford	long standing icw father
1851	Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/George Town	*Wasp*
1851	Morrison, John	Evandale/Launceston	*Royal Oak*
1851	Cotham, Lawrence	Richmond/Hobart Town	*Richmond Royal Mail*
1851	Hughes, Peter	Hobart Town/Launceston	license icw James Lord
1852	Lapham, Edward	Hobart Town/Launceston	license
1852	Lord, James	Hobart Town/Launceston	*Tally-Ho*
1852	Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Surprise*
1852	Lyall & Ritchie	Launceston/Perth/Longford	bought John Hyrons
1852	Lyall, Robert & Motton, William	George Town/Hobart Town	license
1852	Lyall, Pascoe, Motton & Thomas	Deloraine/Westbury/Launceston	bought Douglas
1852	Martin, William Fox	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	
1852	Stace, Thomas Hollis	Hobart Town/North-West bay	
1852	Fisher, Joseph	Kingston/Hobart Town	Brown's River Coaches
1852	Sullivan, John	Hobart Town/Launceston	license
1852	Hanney, John & Thomas	George Town/Hobart Town	license
1852	Hanney, John & Son	Evandale/Launceston	bought Mrs Morrison

1852	Hyrons, Benjamin	Deloraine/Launceston	*Royal Dispatch*
1852	Lawson, Thomas	Launceston/Perth/Longford	bought Lyall & Ritchie
1852	Lyall, Robert	Launceston/Westbury	
1853	Brown, Joseph & Millward, William	Hobart Town/Launceston	Brown & Millward, license
1853	Frost, George		license
1853	Hyrons, Benjamin	Hobart Town/Launceston	*Confidence*
1853	Guy	Richmond/Hobart Town	
1853	Mills, Mahala	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	
1853	Mills, Mahala	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	
1853	Martin, William Fox	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	
1853	Solomon, David	Hobart Town/Launceston	license
1853		Campbell Town/Fingal/Falmouth	
1854	Fisher, Joseph	Brown's River/Hobart Town	*Perseverance* (Gritten)
1854	Lord, James	Hobart Town/Launceston	Lord & Co, *Tally-Ho, Harkaway*
1854	O'Donnell, Daniel	Launceston/Westbury	restart
1854	Hanney, John	Evandale/Launceston	*Royal Oak*
1854	Ayton, Edward & Wells, Henry	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine	*Shamrock*
1854	Solomon, David	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Dispatch,* intent
1855	Spearman, William	Deloraine/Westbury/Launceston	
1855	Hanney, John	Evandale/Launceston	*Industry (*formerly *Confidence)*
1855	Spearman, William	Deloraine/Westbury/Launceston	bought Ayton
1855	Lucas		New Norfolk Coach
1855	Brown & Thompson	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Monarch,* coach and steamer
1855	Brown & Thompson	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	Partnerships dissolved
1855	Frost, George	Oatlands/Hobart Town	*Lord Raglan*
1855	Frost, George	Hobart Town/Launceston	intent
1855	James, W.	Hamilton/New Norfolk	
1855	Clarke, W.H.	Hamilton/New Norfolk	
1855	Bergan, James	Hobart Town/Launceston	(Campbell Town)
1855	Morrison, William	Campbell Town/Falmouth	
1855	Cooley, Thomas Todd	Hobart Town/New Town	Omnibus, *City of Hobart*
1856	Goble, William Francis	Hobart Town/New Town	Omnibus, *Surprise*
1856	Brown, Daniel	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Monarch* renamed *Fair Play*
1856	Harvey, William	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	Harvey & Co, bought Brown
1856	Mills, Thomas William	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	proprietor, then icw Fisher
1856	Cooley, Thomas Todd	Hobart Town/New Town	3 x Omnibus, *Tasmania, Ben Bolt*
1856	Gaylor, Charles		imported stage-coaches
1856	Solomon, David	Launceston/Perth/Longford	bought Avery's interest
1856	Collins, James	Launceston/Westbury	
1856	Bell, John	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	(partner) Harvey & Co dissolved
1857	Fisher, Joseph	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	bought Bell
1857	Wilson, William	Hobart Town/Launceston	(Cleveland) License
1857	Hyrons, Benjamin	Torquay/Tarleton	Steamer, *Governor Wynyard*
1857	Lucas, N. & T.	special	*Perseverance*
1858	Holding, George	Richmond/Hobart Town	
1858	Page, Samuel jnr	Hobart Town/Launceston	
1858	Frost, George	special	
1858	Lucas	special	Messrs Lucas
1858	Scott, Thomas	Green Ponds/Bothwell	
1858	Cooley	Hobart Town/New Town	Omnibus
1858	Horman, James	Hobart Town/New Town	Omnibus
1858	Burris	Ouse/Hamilton/New Norfolk	
1858	Smith, James	Torquay/Latrobe/Deloraine	*Enterprise*
1858	Harris, Walter	Launceston/Patterson's Plains	Omnibus, *Hero*
1859	Hyrons	Launceston/Perth/Longford	Hyrons & Harris
1859	Spearman, William	Launceston/Perth/Longford	
1859	Lyall, Robert	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine	Wells £50 share
1860	Pascoe, James	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine	Pascoe & Co
1860	Lucas, N. & T.	special	
1861	Page, Samuel	Hobart Town/Launceston	partnership (son) dissolved
1861	Brown, William	Hobart Town/Launceston	(Geelong) *Leviathan*
1861	Hyrons, John	Launceston/Perth/Longford	selling out
1862	Cobb & Co		re Brown's asset sale
1862	Broughton	Cascade Road	license
1862	McCartney, Edward	Hobart Town/New Town	Omnibus, *Lady Don*
1862	Allwright, T.	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Perseverance*, Allwright & Co
1862	Lucas, Thomas		insolvent
1862	Brown, William	Hobart Town/Launceston	insolvent
1862	Ayton, Edward	Launceston/Lymington	license
1863	Allwright, T.	special	Allwright & Eady, *Perseverance*
1863	Avery, George	Launceston/Perth/Longford/Cressy	license

1864	Ryley	Richmond/Hobart Town	
1864	Worsley	Hobart Town/North-West bay	
1864	Ayton, Edward	Launceston/Lymington	
1864	Cooley	Hobart Town/New Town/O'Brien's Bridge	Omnibus
1864	Lawson, Thomas	Launceston/Perth/Longford/Cressy	
1864	Spearman, William	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine	Spearman & East
1864	Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/Perth/Longford	(Sir John Franklin's coach)
1864	Hyrons, John	Launceston/Perth/Longford	mail contract
1864	Smith, John	Corners/Falmouth	mail contract
1864	Cobb & Co	Hobart Town/Launceston	unsuccesful tender
1864	Poole	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine	
1865	Downes	Launceston/Perth/Longford/Cressy	*Comet*
1865	Lawson, Thomas	Launceston/Perth/Longford/Cressy	Lawson, Cox & Co
1865	Roberts	Launceston/Westbury	
1865	Upton	Deloraine/Torquay	
1865	Jones & Turner	Launceston	Omnibus, *Surprise,* specials then dissolved
1865	East, James	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine	Selling out?
1865	Moore	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	
1866		Richmond/Hobart Town	*Dispatch*
1866	Roberts	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine	
1867	Robertson, Wagner & Co	Hobart Town/Launceston	mail contract, but did not start
1867	Cooley, John & Charles	Bridgewater	special - ploughing match
1867	Hyrons & Harris	Launceston/Longford	Omnibus, special - show
1868	Hanney	Launceston/Hobart Town	Omnibus, special, Hobart Town races
1868	Turner, William	Launceston/Hobart Town	Break, special, Hobart Town races
1868	Burton	Richmond/Hobart Town	
1868	Turner, William	Launceston	engaged Charles Cooley
1868	Harris, Job	Launceston/Railway construction camp	Omnibus
1869	Page, Samuel	Hobart Town/Victoria (Huon)	
1870	Lewis	Richmond/Hobart Town	
1870	Crawford	Hobart Town/Huon	
1870	Smith, John	Campbell Town/Fingal - Mangana	
1870	Turner	special	*Victoria*
1870	Turner & Southall	Launceston/Mangana	*Victoria* renamed *Escort*
1870	Cobb & Co	special - Gen Tom Thumb and troupe	imported only for the event
1870	Basstian	Hobart Town/O'Brien's Bridge	Omnibus
c1870	Atkinson, Edward	Launceston	Omnibus
1871	Allwright, T.	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	
1871	Southall, J.	Launceston/Fingal	*Eclipse*
1871	Edwards, Charles (& Black, John)	Launceston	Railway omnibus
1871	Simmons, William	Launceston/Mowbray	operating unlicensed
1872	Page, Samuel	Hobart Town/Victoria (Huon)	Parsons, Page & Parsons
1872	Hanney	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington	*Union*
1872	Hanney, Mrs	Evandale/Launceston	selling out
1872	Jordan	Launceston/Carrick	*Express*
1872	Smith, John	Launceston/Fingal	Smith & Co
1872	Burbury, Alfred	Hobart Town/Launceston	
1872	Cooley, John T.	Hobart Town/Glenorchy/Launceston	Omnibus
1872	Monk, James	Hobart Town/New Town	Omnibus
1873	Cooley, John & Charles	Hobart Town/New Town/O'Brien's Bridge	Omnibus
1873	Gray	ex Launceston	*Union*
1873	Webb	Launceston/Fingal	*Eclipse*
1873	Webb, Daniel jnr	Campbell Town/Fingal	
1873	Burbury, Alfred	Oatlands/Hobart Town	*Tasmania*
1873	Page, Samuel	Oatlands/Hobart Town	
1873	Brooks, Edward	Hamilton/Ouse/Bothwell	mail coach
1873	Burbury, Alfred	Bothwell/Melton Mowbray	[Alf. C. Burbury?]
1873	Dove, S.	Clarence/Muddy Plains	Omnibus, special - races
1873	Goodman, Thomas	Longford	stage-coach proprietor
1873	Burbury, Alfred	Corners/Falmouth/George's Bay	
1873	Smith, John	Launceston/Fingal	Omnibus
1873	Smith, John	Campbell Town/Fingal/Falmouth	sold to Samuel Page
1874	Turner, William	Evandale/Launceston	bought Gray
1874	Smith	Launceston/Nine Mile Springs	
1874	Page, Samuel	Launceston/Fingal	
1874		Green Ponds coaching plant	sold
1874	Burbury, Alfred	Hobart Town/Green Ponds	
1874	Burden	Richmond/Hobart Town	
1874	Atkins	Hobart Town/Sandy Bay	car
1874	Turner	Bellerive/Sorell	
1874	Lanaghan, W.	Bellerive/Sorell	

1875	Reynolds, William	Brighton/Hobart Town	
1875	Cooley, Charles M.	Brighton/Hobart Town	ex Pontville
1875	Mills, T.	Green Ponds	stage-coach proprietor
1875	Burbury, Alfred	Hobart Town/Kempton [Green Ponds]	
1875	Burbury, Alfred	Broadmarsh	branch service
1875	Burbury, Alfred	Hobart Town/Launceston	insolvent
1875	Eady, C.G.	Hobart Town/Huon	
1875	Eady, Charles Golding		insolvent
1875	Turner, William	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington	
1875	Atkinson	Launceston	Omnibus, special, St Leonard's juvenile bazaar
1876	Atkinson, William	Launceston	Railway omnibus
1876	Jeffrey	Hobart Town/Huon	Jeffrey & Co
1876	Reynolds	Hobart Town/Kempton [Green Ponds]	
1876	Spearman, William	Deloraine/Latrobe	mail, from railhead
1876	Page, Samuel jnr	Corners/Falmouth/George's Bay	bought Page
1877	Page, Samuel	Hobart Town/Oatlands	
1877	Page, Samuel	northern plant	sold
1877	Smith, J.T, & Watts, F.	Launceston/Nine Mile Springs	partnership dissolved
1877	Alexander, Joseph	Emu Bay/Torquay	American vehicle
1878	Yeend	Hobart Town/Huon	mail coach
1878	Jacobs	Kangaroo Point/Richmond	
1878	Dove	Hobart Town/Bridgewater	
1878	Wells	Bellerive/Sorell	
1878	Hanney	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington	
1878	Gamble, J.	Launceston/Brandy Creek	
1878	Hall, C.	Launceston/Brandy Creek	
1878	Page, Samuel	southern plant	sold, d1878
1879	Dove	Hobart Town/Brown's River	
1879	Dove	Hobart Town/Sorell	
1879	Gill	Hobart Town/Sorell	
1879	Hill	Hobart Town/Sorell	
1879	O'Neill, J.	Emu Bay/Latrobe	
1879	Huett	Deloraine/Latrobe	
1880	Webster	Hobart Town/Huon	
1880	Nichol	Richmond/Hobart Town	
1880		Bridgewater Stn/New Norfolk	conveyance
1880	Guthridge	Launceston/Lymington	
1881	Jory, W.	Launceston/Beaconsfield	
1881	Beswick, S.	Launceston/Scottsdale/Branxholm	
1881	Counsel	Scottsdale/Branxholm	mail coach
1881	Webster, W. & F.	Hobart/Sorell	special - races
1881	Cooley's	Kangaroo Point/Sorell	special - races
1881	Gill	Kangaroo Point/Sorell	special - races
1881	Huett, H.J.	Deloraine/Latrobe	bought Spearman
1881	Spearman, William	Launceston/Lefroy	bought Gamble
1881	Spearman, Keep & Co	Deloraine/Latrobe	
1881	Petrie, Charles	Lefroy/George Town	meet steamer
1882	Hanson & Baker	Hobart/Cascades	Omnibus
1882	Allwright, Thomas	New Norfolk/Bridgewater Stn	
1882	Hill, Richard	Hobart/Sorell	selling out
1882	Tyler, James	Hobart/Sorell	bought Hill
1882	Spearman, William	Launceston/Lefroy	
1882	Jory, W.	Launceston/Lefroy	
1882	Burnell	Launceston	Omnibus
1883	Spearman, H	Deloraine/Latrobe	Spearman, Keep & Co dissolved
1883	Huett & O'Neill	Deloraine/Emu Bay	partnership or coordination?
1883	Flight & Co	Latrobe/Emu Bay	*Perseverance*
1883	Spearman	Gladstone	meet steamer
1884	Spearman, W.J.	Launceston/Ringarooma	
1884	Beswick, S.	Launceston/Ringarooma	
1884	Spearman	Launceston/Beaconsfield	
1884	Fyfe	Evandale/Lymington	special - concert
1884	Turner & Jones	Launceston	Omnibuses
1884	Bailey, F. Gerald	Hobart/Richmond	sold to Jack
1884	Jack, W.	Hobart/Richmond	bought Bailey
1884	Bower	Hobart/Brown's River	
1884	Burbury & Mead	Hobart/Cascades	Omnibus
1884	Prior	Launceston/Beaconsfield	
1885	Jack	Richmond/Hobart	mail coach
1885	Hamilton, James	Launceston Omnibus Co	
1885	Burbury, Alfred	Hobart/Cascades	Omnibus

1885	Hobart Car Co	Hobart/Cascades	Omnibus
1886	Burbury, Alfred	Hobart/Sandy Bay	Omnibus
1886	Loone & Bonner	Launceston/Scottsdale/Branxholm	
1886	Beswick, Samuel McKenzie	Launceston	bankrupt
1887	Wilson, J.T.	Sheffield/Railton	mail coach
1887	Wiseman, J.	Formby/Table Cape/Circular Head	
1887	Thompson	Sorell	excursion, Thompson Bros
1887	Ludby	Hobart/Sandfly (Huon Road)	
1887	Burden	Campania Stn/Spring Bay/Swansea	mail coach
1887	Burn	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington	
1887	Clancy	Launceston/Lefroy	
1887	Dandoe	Launceston/Westbury	
1887	Smith	Launceston/Beaconsfield	mail coach
1887	Bardenhagen, L.	Launceston/Upper Piper	
1887	Page, Samuel jnr	George's Bay/Moorina	
1888	Page, Samuel jnr	Oatlands	special - races [Sydney Page, Sec]
1888	Reynolds, Edwin	Green Ponds	proprietor
1888	Fitzpatrick	Formby/Ulverstone	Fitzpatrick's Coaches
1888	Bonner	Launceston/Scottsdale/Derby	
1888	Owen, Thomas	Launceston	Omnibus
1889	Burbury, Alfred	North Hobart Omnibus	sold to C. Ward
1889	Hogan, J.	Hobart/Battery Point/Sandy Bay	Omnibus
1889	Raynor, E.W.	Gretna	excursion, Macquarie Plains
1889	Reynolds, Edwin	Brighton Stn/Green Ponds/Bothwell	branch to Broadmarsh
1889	Brooks & Faulkner	Scottsdale/Moorina/Gladstone	
1890	Southerwood	Launceston/Beaconsfield	
1890	Ward	Hobart	Omnibus
1890	Porthouse	Hobart	Omnibus
1890	Fisher	Hobart/Kingston	Fisher's Royal Mail Coaches
1891	Webster	Hobart/Franklin/Honeywood	Huon, mail coach
1891	Burn	Hobart/Richmond	mail coach
1891	Cooley	Hobart/New Town/Glenorchy	Omnibuses
1891	Gourley	Hobart/Cascades	Omnibuses
1891	Brooks & Faulkner	Zeehan/Trial Harbour (Remine)	*Telegraph Line of Coaches*
1891	Smith, Edward	Scottsdale/Derby/Moorina	
1891	Thompson Bros	Sorell/Dunally	mail coach
1891	Owen	Launceston/Evandale	special - Xmas Fair
1891	Andrew Bros & Kerr	Zeehan/Dundas	Andrew Bros & Kerr
1892	Fisher & Rule	Hobart/Brown's River	Fisher & Rule
1892	Ikin, W.	Hobart	Mail coach and horses for Theatre Royal
1892	Goss, James	Longford/Cressy	
1892	Goss, James	Longford	sale, deceased estate
1892	Page, Samuel jnr	George's Bay, Fingal	bankrupt
1892	Atkinson, E.	Sheffield/Railton	special - races
1892	Kempling, James	Waratah/Whyte River	mail coach
1893	Reynolds	Campania Stn/Spring Bay/Swansea	mail coach
1893	Dando & Harrington	Launceston/Westbury	Dando & Harrington
1893	Southerwood, W.J.	Launceston/Lefroy	
1893	Page, Louisa Jessie	Fingal	coach proprietress, bankrupt
1893	Webster, K.L.	Huon Coaches	K.L. Webster and Co
1893	Thomson, J.W.		coaching line in the north
1894	Mead	Hobart	Omnibuses
1894	McDermott	Bellerive/Sandford/South Arm	
1894	Haney	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington	
1894	Trowbridge, J.T.	Derby/Scottsdale	
1894	Burn	Bellerive/Richmond	
1894	Southerwood, W.J.	Launceston Omnibus and Tramway Co	purchaser
1894	Spearman, Henry	Launceston	Omnibus
1895	Ford	Hobart/Battery Point	Omnibus
1895	Page, Samuel jnr	Fingal/Mathinna	
1896	Owen & Spearman	Launceston	Omnibus merger
1896	Turner, H.	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington	
1896	Bray, G.	Launceston/Westbury	
1897	Green	Sorell/Dunally	mail coach
1897	Page, Sydney	Macquarie Stn/Lake St Clair/Gormanston	one season only
1897	Hunn, Jacob	Swansea	coach proprietor
1898	Johnstone	Hobart/Battery Point	Omnibus
1898	Forey	Hobart	Omnibus
1898	Jory, M.	Launceston/Beaconsfield	
1899	Rule, H.J.	Hobart/Brown's River	
1899	Warren	Hobart	Omnibuses

1899	Brooke, R.J.	Launceston/Beaconsfield	
1900	Clarke, R.	Launceston/Beaconsfield	
1900	Ellerton	Brighton Stn/Bothwell	special - sale
1900	Austin	Excursion coach	special - sale, Brown's River
1900	Tremaine	Oatlands/rail connections	special - Hobart Show
1900	Thompson	St Helens/St Mary's/Derby/Mathinna	mail coach
1900	Smithies, J.R.	Burnie/Ulverstone	
1900	Wiseman, Thomas	Burnie	license
1900	Turner, W.	Burnie	license
1901	Owen & Spearman	Burnie	license
1901	Tatlow, Charles	Wynyard/Stanley	
1901	Bowden Bros	Bothwell/Great Lake	
1901	Ellerton	Hobart/Bagdad	
1901	Hill & Robinson	Sorell/Orford/Swansea	Hill & Robinson, mail coach
1901	Richardson	Campbell Town/Swansea	
1902	Rule, J.H.	Hobart/Brown's River	
1902	Cooper Bros	Hobart/Geeveston	mail coach
1902	Terry, E.	Scottsdale/Gladstone	license
1902	Green, J.	Bellerive/Rokeby/Sandford	
1902	Hill, William	Queenstown/Gormanston	
1903	Fisher	Hobart	Omnibuses
1903	Fisher, C.	Hobart	Omnibuses
1903	Stott, W.H.	Latrobe	license
1903	Rometch	Hobart	tourist excursions
1903	Williams, E.	Launceston/Westbury	
1904	Hill, William	Queenstown/Gormanston/Linda Valley	sold to Dixon
1904	Bramich, J.T.	Latrobe	license
1904	Maddox, C.	Latrobe	license
1904	Southerwood, W.J.	Launceston/Beaconsfield	night
1904	Rometch & Duncan	Hobart/Franklin/Geeveston	Rometch & Duncan
1904	Doran, Frank	Port Cygnet/Huonville	license
1905	Rometch & Duncan	Huon	excursions
1905	Ellen, J.	Hobart	Omnibuses
1905	Dixon, John	Queenstown/Gormanston/Linda Valley	mail coach
1905	Hill & Robinson	Campbell Town/Swansea	
1905	Hill & Robinson	Triabunna/Buckland	mail coach
1905	Hill, C.	Sorell/Forcett/Dunally	mail coach
1906	Bantick, A.	Hobart/Bagdad	
1906	Huon Cooperative Co	Hobart/Franklin	
1906	Delany, E.	Hobart	Omnibuses
1906	Smith, Garnet	Launceston/Carrick	weekly
1906	Kelly, E.C. Mrs	Queenstown/Gormanston/Linda Valley	
1906	Powell, Alice Ann	Cressy	mail coach, proprietress
1906	Tremaine	Parattah/Oatlands	
1906	McGlade, W.	Burnie	license
1906	Brown, H.	Burnie	license
1906	Stott, Walter	Latrobe	license
1906	McMichael, George	Scottsdale/St Mary's	Thompson & McMichael
1907	Southerwood, W.J.	Launceston/Beaconsfield//Lefroy	Southerwoods Buses & Coaches
1908	Green, J.R.	Sorell/Dunally/Carnarvon	mail coach
1908	Burton, G.W.	Queenstown/Gormanston/Linda Valley	mail coach
1908	Rule, J.H.	Hobart/Kingston	special
1908	Thompson, J.W.	St Helens	mail coach, proprietor
1908	Robinson	Campbell Town/Lake Leake	special - fishing
1909	Tatlow, Charles	& Stanley/Smithton/Irishtown/Montagu	
1909	Thompson, J.W.	St Helens	mail motors
1909	White, P.	Hobart	Omnibuses
1909	Stubbs, C.H.	Campbell Town/Cressy	mail coach
1909	Polley	Fingal/Mathinna	
1909	McLaren	Ulverstone/Upper Castra//North Motton	mail coaches
1909	Cullen, T.	Ulverstone/South Preston	
1909	McMichael, George	Scottsdale/Ringarooma/Branxholm/Derby	mail coach
1910	Craig, C.	Bothwell/Apsley	
1910	Batt, H.	Bothwell/Great Lake	weekly
1910	Bludstone, B.W.	Lovett/Huonville	mail coach
1910	White, W.J.	Ringarooma	mail coach
1910	Thompson	Weldborough	horse coach proprietor
1911	Free, W.	Bellerive/Rokeby/Sandford	
1911	Thompson, J.W.	Lottah	reinstated horses due weather
1911	Owen & Spearman	Launceston electrification	last horse omnibus
1911	Southerwood, W.J.	Launceston/Trevallyn	horse omnibus

1911	Webster, Rometch & Co	Huon	
1911	Brickliffe, E.	Geeveston	license
1911	Tremaine, J.	Oatlands/Melton	special - sale
1911	Fisher, Joseph	Oatlands/Melton	special - sale
1911		Macquarie Plains/Hamilton/Ouse	
1911	Robinson	Buckland	special - concert
1912		Apsley/Bothwell	
1912	Burrell, A.	Oatlands	special - Hobart Show
1912	Sutcliffe	Bellerive/Rokeby/Sandford	
1912	Webster, Rometch & Duncan	Huon	mail coach
1913	Dwyer, L.	Launceston/Carrick	
1913	Crick, E.J.	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington	
1913	Biggs & Leech	Scottsdale	license
1913	Peevor, C.	Ringarooma	license
1913	White, W.J.	Ringarooma	license
1913	Terry, A.	Ringarooma	license
1913	Holland, C.J.	Ringarooma	license
1913	Stubbs, Charles Henicker	Cressy	coach proprietor, insolvent
1913	Batt, H.	Bothwell	coach proprietor
1913	Webster, Rometch & Duncan	Hobart/Huon	last horse coach on route
1913	Southerwood, W.J.	Launceston/Beaconsfield	motorised
1914	Young	Bellerive/Rokeby/Sandford	
1914	Holland, C.J.	Branxholm/Derby	
1915	Southerwood, W.J.	Launceston	sold remaining horses and vehicles
1915	Rees, E.J.	Sheffield	license
1915	Jacobs, J.	Cambridge/Richmond	coach proprietor
1919	Holland, C.J.	Derby	closed accounts
1919	Tatlow, Charles	Burnie/Wynyard/Stanley/Smithton	partially motorised, specials
1919	Marshall	Devonport	specials
1919		Geeveston/Dover	mail service motorised
1919		Marrawah/Temma	
1920	Burton, G.W.	Queenstown/Gormanston/Linda Valley	motorised
1921		Oatlands/Interlaken	mail coach
1922	Rainsford, A.	Oatlands/Lamont	mail coach
1923	Free, W.G.	Rokeby/South Arm	license
1924	Cobb & Co		last stage-coach in Australia?
1927		Bellerive/Richmond	coach - all others described as motor
1927	Crick, E.J.	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington	coach - all others described as motor

APPENDIX B

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF ENTREPRENEURS

Entrepreneur	Location/route	Remarks	Date
Alexander, Joseph	Emu Bay/Torquay	American vehicle	1877
Allwright, Thomas	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Perseverance*, Allwright & Co	1862
Allwright, Thomas	special	Allwright & Eady, *Perseverance*	1863
Allwright, Thomas	New Norfolk/Hobart Town		1871
Allwright, Thomas	New Norfolk/Bridgewater Stn		1882
Anderson, John	Oatlands/Green Ponds	*Jolly Nose*	1842
Andrew Bros	Zeehan/Dundas	Andrew Bros & Kerr	1891
Atkins	Hobart Town/Sandy Bay	car	1874
Atkinson	Launceston	Omnibus, special, St Leonard's juvenile bazaar	1875
Atkinson, Edward	Launceston	Omnibus	c1870
Atkinson, E.	Sheffield/Railton	special - races	1892
Atkinson, Francis	Richmond	Insolvent 1847	1846
Atkinson, William	Launceston	Railway omnibus	1876
Austen, J	Black Snake/Hobart Town	Messrs Mills & J. Austen	1834
Austin, James		*Telegraph*	1835
Austin, Josiah	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	Austin & Baker, J & S Austin, *Fairplay*	1833
Austin, Solomon	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	Austin & Baker, J & S Austin, *Fairplay*	1833
Austin	Excursion coach	special - sale, Brown's River	1900
Avery, George	Launceston/Perth/Longford	bought out by Solomon	1856
Avery, George	Launceston/Perth/Longford/Cressy	license	1863
Ayton, Edward	Deloraine/Westbury/Launceston	Ayton & Wells, *Shamrock*	1854
Ayton, Edward	Launceston/Lymington	license	1862
Ayton, Edward	Launceston/Lymington		1864
Bailey, F. Gerald	Hobart/Richmond	sold to W. Jack	1884
Baker	Hobart/Cascades	Omnibus, Hanson & Baker	1882
Baker, Charles	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	Austin & Baker, *Eclipse*	1833
Baker, Charles	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	Baker & Bridger	1835
Baker, R.	Westbury/Deloraine	*Rover*	1851
Bantick, A.	Hobart/Bagdad		1906
Bardenhagen, L.	Launceston/Upper Piper		1887
Barton, William	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Union*	1844
Basstian	Hobart Town/O'Brien's Bridge	Omnibus	1870
Batt, H.	Bothwell/Great Lake	weekly	1910
Batt, H.	Bothwell	coach proprietor	1913
Bell, John	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	(partner) Harvey & Co dissolved	1856
Bergan, James	Hobart Town/Launceston	(Campbell Town)	1855
Beswick, Samuel McKenzie	Launceston/Scottsdale/Branxholm		1881
Beswick, Samuel McKenzie	Launceston/Ringarooma		1884
Beswick, Samuel McKenzie	Launceston	bankrupt	1886
Biggs	Scottsdale	Biggs & Leech, license	1913
Black, John (& Edwards, Charles)	Launceston	Railway omnibus	1871
Blackwell, Samuel	Green Ponds/Bothwell		1850
Bludstone, B.W.	Lovett/Huonville	mail coach	1910
Bonner	Launceston/Scottsdale/Branxholm	Loone & Bonner	1886
Bonner	Launceston/Scottsdale		1888
Bowden Bros	Bothwell/Great Lake	Bowden Bros	1901
Bower	Hobart/Brown's River	[George Bowers?]	1884
Bramich, J.T.	Latrobe	license	1904
Bray, G.	Launceston/Westbury		1896
Brickliffe, E.	Geeveston	license	1911
Bridger, Henry	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	Baker & Bridger	1835
Bridger, Henry	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	New Norfolk Coaches icw J & J Austin & Baker	1836
Bridges, John	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Victoria, Wonder*	1845
Bridges, John	Green Ponds/Bridgewater	*Steam Boat Regulator Coach*	1847
Brodie, George Sinclair	Hobart Town/Launceston	Brodie & Cutts, *Wasp* (1837)	1834
Brooke, R.J.	Launceston/Beaconsfield		1899
Brooker, Mark	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	insolvent 1849	1848

Brooks, Edward	Hamilton/Ouse/Bothwell	mail coach	1873
Brooks, E.	Scottsdale/Moorina/Gladstone	Brooks & Faulkner	1889
Brooks, E.	Zeehan/Trial Harbour (Remine)	Brooks & Faulkner, *Telegraph Line of Coaches*	1891
Broughton	Cascade Road	license	1862
Brown, Daniel	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	Brown & Thompson, *Monarch*	1855
Brown, Daniel	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Monarch* renamed *Fair Play*	1856
Brown, H.	Burnie	license	1906
Brown, Joseph	Hobart Town/Launceston	Brown & Millward, license	1853
Brown, William	Hobart Town/Launceston	(Geelong) *Leviathan*	1861
Brown, William	Hobart Town/Launceston	insolvent	1862
Burbury, Alfred	Hobart Town/Launceston	*Tasmania*	1872
Burbury, Alfred	Oatlands/Hobart Town		1873
Burbury, Alfred	Bothwell/Melton Mowbray	[Alf. C. Burbury?]	1873
Burbury, Alfred	Campbell Town/Falmouth/George's Bay		1873
Burbury, Alfred	Hobart Town/Green Ponds		1874
Burbury, Alfred	Hobart Town/Kempton [Green Ponds]		1875
Burbury, Alfred	Broadmarsh	branch service	1875
Burbury, Alfred	Hobart Town/Launceston	insolvent	1875
Burbury, Alfred	Hobart/Cascades	Omnibus, Burbury & Mead	1884
Burbury, Alfred	Hobart/Cascades	Omnibus [no mention by 1890]	1885
Burbury, Alfred	Hobart/Sandy Bay	Omnibus [no mention by 1890]	1886
Burbury, Alfred	North Hobart Omnibus	sold to C. Ward, d 1899	1889
Burden, George	Richmond/Hobart Town		1874
Burden, George	Campania Stn/Spring Bay/Swansea	mail coach	1887
Burn	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington		1887
Burn	Hobart/Richmond	mail coach	1891
Burn	Bellerive/Richmond		1894
Burnell	Launceston	Omnibus	1882
Burrell, A.	Oatlands	special - Hobart Show	1912
Burris	Ouse/Hamilton/New Norfolk		1858
Burton	Richmond/Hobart Town		1868
Burton, G.W.	Queenstown/Gormanston/Linda Valley	mail coach	1908
Burton, G.W.	Queenstown/Gormanston/Linda Valley	motorised	1920
Chiene, Walter Glas	Hobart Town/Launceston	Mail coach, d 1841	1838
Clancey	Launceston/Lefroy		1887
Clarke, R.	Launceston/Beaconsfield		1900
Clarke, W.H.	Hamilton/New Norfolk		1855
Cobb & Co		re Brown's asset sale	1862
Cobb & Co	Hobart Town/Launceston	unsuccesful tender	1864
Cobb & Co proxy	Hobart Town/Launceston	Robertson, Wagner & Co	1867
Cobb & Co	special - Gen Tom Thumb and troupe	imported only for the event	1870
Cobb & Co		last stage-coach in Australia	1924
Collins, James, and Robinson, G.W	Hamilton/Hobart Town		1834
Collins, James	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Truth and Day*	1835
Collins, James	Launceston/Westbury		1856
Cooley, Thomas Todd	Green Ponds	Omnibus, special	1849
Cooley, Thomas Todd	Hobart Town/New Town	Omnibus, *City of Hobart*	1855
Cooley, Thomas Todd	Hobart Town/New Town	3 x Omnibus, *Tasmania, Ben Bolt*	1856
Cooley	Hobart Town/New Town/O'Brien's Bridge	Omnibus	1864
Cooley, John & Charles	Bridgewater	special - ploughing match	1867
Cooley, John T.	Hobart Town/Glenorchy/Launceston	Omnibus	1872
Cooley, John & Charles	Hobart Town/New Town/O'Brien's Bridge	Omnibus	1873
Cooley, Charles M.	Brighton/Hobart Town	ex Pontville	1875
Cooley	Kangaroo Point/Sorell	special - races	1881
Cooley	Hobart/New Town/Glenorchy	Omnibuses	1891
Cooling, Robert	Kangaroo Point/Richmond/Sorell		1832
Cooper Bros	Hobart/Geeveston	Cooper Bros, mail coach	1902
Cooper, Edward	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	(With William Petty) Cooper & Co*, Victoria*	1846
Cotham, Lawrence	Richmond/Hobart Town	*Tasmanian*	1847
Cotham, Lawrence	Richmond/Hobart Town	*Tasmanian, Omnibus*	1848
Cotham, Lawrence	Sorell/Richmond/Hobart Town	*Royal Tasmanian*	1849
Cotham, Lawrence	Richmond/Hobart Town	*Richmond Royal Mail*	1851
Couling, Robert	Launceston/Perth		1832
Counsel	Scottsdale/Branxholm	mail coach	1881
Cox, John Edward	Hobart Town/Launceston	*Diligence* (1834) d 1837	1832
Cox, John Edward	Launceston/Perth/Longford		1834
Cox, Mary Ann	Hobart Town/Launceston	d 1858	1832

Cox	Launceston/Perth/Longford/Cressy	Lawson, Cox & Co	1865
Craig, C.	Bothwell/Apsley		1910
Crawford	Hobart Town/Huon		1870
Crick, E.J.	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington		1913
Cullen, T.	Ulverstone/South Preston		1909
Cutts, William	Hobart Town/Launceston	Brodie & Cutts, *Wasp* (1837)	1834
Cutts, William	Hobart/Green Ponds	Seasonal, *Wasp*	1839
Dandoe	Launceston/Westbury		1887
Dando	Launceston/Westbury	Dando & Harrington	1893
Davis, John	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Regulator*	1841
Davis, John (?)	Richmond/Pontville	connection at *Castle Inn*	1845
Davis, John (?)	Broad Marsh/Pontville	*connection at Castle Inn*	1845
Davis, John	Hobart Town/Launceston	Partner (one half share) in Comet Co	1847
Delany, E.	Hobart	Omnibuses	1906
Dixon	Fox Inn/Hobart Town	Dixon & Co, Omnibus	1832
Dixon, John	Queenstown/Gormanston/Linda Valley	mail coach	1905
Dodery, William	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Wonder*	1846
Dodge, Ralph	Richmond/Hobart Town		1843
Doran, Frank	Port Cygnet/Huonville	license	1904
Dormer, William	(Ross) Oatlands/?	license	1850
Douglas, Roddam H.	Deloraine/Westbury		1850
Douglas, Roddam H.	Westbury/Carrick/Launceston	*The Age*	1851
Dove, S.	Clarence/Muddy Plains	Omnibus, special - races	1873
Dove	Hobart Town/Bridgewater		1878
Dove	Hobart Town/Brown's River		1879
Dove	Hobart Town/Sorell		1879
Downes	Launceston/Perth/Longford/Cressy	*Comet*	1865
Duncan	Hobart/Franklin/Geeveston	Rometch & Duncan	1904
Duncan	Huon	Rometch & Duncan, excursions	1905
Duncan	Huon	Webster, Rometch & Duncan, mail coach	1912
Dwyer, L.	Launceston/Carrick		1913
Eady, C.G.	special	Allwright & Eady, *Perseverance*	1863
Eady, C.G.	Hobart Town/Huon	mail coach	1875
Eady, Charles Golding		insolvent	1875
Earswell, Henry	Deloraine/Westbury/Launceston		1845
East, James	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine	Spearman & East	1864
East, James	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine	Selling out?	1865
Edwards, Charles (& Black, John)	Launceston	Railway omnibus	1871
Edwards, James	Launceston/Pleasant Hills (Devon)		1850
Ellen, J.	Hobart	Omnibuses	1905
Ellerton	Brighton Stn/Bothwell	special - sale	1900
Ellerton	Hobart/Bagdad		1901
Ellis, W.H.	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	W.H. Ellis & Co, *Regulator*	1846
Ellis, W.H.	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Regulator*	1847
Farrant, William	Campbell Town/Launceston		1848
Farrant, William	Launceston/Oatlands	Insolvent 1848	1848
Faulkner, T.	Scottsdale/Moorina/Gladstone	Brooks & Faulkner	1889
Faulkner, T.	Zeehan/Trial Harbour (Remine)	Brooks & Faulkner, *Telegraph Line of Coaches*	1891
Fawkner, John Pascoe	Launceston/Perth		1832
Fawkner, John Pascoe	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*The Independent*	1834
Fisher, C.	Hobart	Omnibuses	1903
Fisher, Joseph	Brown's River/Hobart Town	*Telegraph, Pic-nic*	1846
Fisher, Joseph	Kingston/Hobart Town	Brown's River Coaches	1852
Fisher, Joseph	Brown's River/Hobart Town	*Perseverance* (Gritten)	1854
Fisher, Joseph	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	icw Mills?	1856
Fisher, Joseph	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	bought Bell	1857
Fisher, Joseph	Oatlands/Melton	special - sale	1911
Fisher	Hobart/Kingston	Fisher's Royal Mail Coaches	1890
Fisher	Hobart/Brown's River	Fisher & Rule	1892
Fisher	Hobart	Omnibuses	1903
Fitzpatrick	Formby/Ulverstone	Fitzpatrick's Coaches	1888
Flight, F.T.	Latrobe/Emu Bay	Flight & Co, *Perseverance*	1883
Ford	Hobart/Battery Point	Omnibus	1895
Forey	Hobart	Omnibus	1898
Free, W.	Bellerive/Rokeby/Sandford		1911
Free, W.G.	Rokeby/South Arm	license	1923
Frost, George		license	1853

Frost, George	Oatlands/Hobart Town	*Lord Raglan*	1855
Frost, George	Hobart Town/Launceston	intent	1855
Frost, George	special		1858
Fyfe	Evandale/Lymington	special - concert	1884
Gamble, J.	Launceston/Brandy Creek		1878
Gamble, J.	Launceston/Lefroy	sold to Spearman	1881
Gaylor, Charles		imported stage-coaches	1856
Gill	Hobart Town/Sorell		1879
Gill	Kangaroo Point/Sorell	special - races	1881
Glover, Charles	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	Curricle	1829
Goble, William Francis	Hobart Town/New Town	Omnibus, *Surprise*	1856
Goodman, Thomas	Launceston/Longford/Cressy	stage-coach proprietor	1872
Goss, James	Longford/Cressy		1892
Goss, James	Longford	sale, deceased estate	1892
Gourley	Hobart/Cascades	Omnibuses	1891
Gray	Richmond/Risdon	Messrs Cutts & Gray's	1840
Gray	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington	*Union*	1873
Gray, William	Evandale/Launceston	sold to Turner	1874
Green	Sorell/Dunally	mail coach	1897
Green, J.	Bellerive/Rokeby/Sandford		1902
Green, J.R.	Sorell/Dunally/Carnarvon	mail coach	1908
Greenbank, Edward	Launceston/Hobart	*Comet Coaches*	1847
Greenbank, Edward	Launceston/Campbell Town	Insolvent 1848	1848
Guthridge	Launceston/Lymington		1880
Guy	Richmond/Hobart Town		1853
Hall, C.	Launceston/Brandy Creek		1878
Hamilton, Henry	Launceston/Hobart Town	(Campbell Town)	1850
Hamilton, James	Launceston Omnibus Co		1885
Hanney, John & Thomas	George Town/Hobart Town	license	1852
Hanney, John & Son	Evandale/Launceston	bought Mrs Morrison	1852
Hanney, John	Evandale/Launceston	*Royal Oak*	1854
Hanney, John	Evandale/Launceston	*Industry (*formerly *Confidence)*	1855
Hanney	Launceston/Hobart Town	Omnibus, special, Hobart Town races	1868
Hanney	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington	*Union*	1872
Hanney, Mrs	Evandale/Launceston	selling out	1872
Hanney	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington		1878
Hanney	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington		1894
Hanson	Hobart/Cascades	Omnibus, Hanson & Baker	1882
Harrington	Launceston/Westbury	Dando & Harrington	1893
Harris, Walter	Launceston/Patterson's Plains	Omnibus, *Hero*	1858
Harris	Launceston/Perth/Longford	Hyrons & Harris	1859
Harris (Hyrons & Harris)	Launceston/Longford	Omnibus, special - show	1867
Harris, Job	Launceston/Railway construction camp	Omnibus	1868
Hart, Goodman	Launceston/Perth/Longford	Partnership with Hyrons	1839
Harvey, William	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	Harvey & Co (Bell) bought Brown	1856
Hill	Sorell/Orford/Swansea	Hill & Robinson, mail coach	1901
Hill	Triabunna/Buckland	Hill & Robinson, mail coach	1905
Hill	Campbell Town/Swansea	Hill & Robinson	1905
Hill, C.	Sorell/Forcett/Dunally	mail coach	1905
Hill, Richard	Hobart Town/Sorell		1879
Hill, Richard	Hobart/Sorell	selling out	1882
Hill, William	Queenstown/Gormanston		1902
Hill, William	Queenstown/Gormanston/Linda Valley	sold to Dixon	1904
Hobart Car Co	Hobart/Cascades	Omnibus	1885
Hogan, J.	Hobart/Battery Point/Sandy Bay	Omnibus	1889
Holding, George	Richmond/Hobart Town		1858
Holland, C.J.	Ringarooma	license	1913
Holland, C.J.	Branxholm/Derby		1914
Holland, C.J.	Derby	closed accounts	1919
Horman, James	Hobart Town/New Town	Omnibus	1858
Huett, J.H.	Deloraine/Latrobe		1879
Huett, J.H.	Deloraine/Latrobe	bought Spearman	1881
Huett, J.H.	Deloraine/Emu Bay	Huett & O'Neill, partnership/coordination?	1883
Hughes, Peter	Hobart Town/Launceston	license icw James Lord	1851
Hunn, Jacob	Swansea	coach proprietor	1897
Huon Cooperative Co	Hobart/Franklin		1906
Hurst	Launceston	Railway omnibus (20 passengers)	1876

Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Morning Star*	1838
Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/George Town		1839
Hyrons, Benjamin	Hobart Town/Launceston	*Young Queen*, delivery?	1840
Hyrons, Benjamin	Hobart Town/Launceston	*Dispatch, Comet, New Comet*	1844
Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Original Comet, Hero (1848)*	1847
Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Comet No 2*	1850
Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/Hobart Town	*Diligence*	1850
Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/George Town	*Wasp*	1851
Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Surprise*	1852
Hyrons, Benjamin	Deloraine/Launceston	*Royal Dispatch*	1852
Hyrons, Benjamin	Hobart Town/Launceston	*Confidence*	1853
Hyrons, Benjamin	Torquay/Tarleton	Steamer, *Governor Wynyard*	1857
Hyrons, Benjamin	Launceston/Perth/Longford	(Sir John Franklin's coach)	1864
Hyrons, John	Launceston/Perth/Longford	long standing icw father	1851
Hyrons, John	Launceston/Perth/Longford	Hyrons & Harris	1859
Hyrons, John	Launceston/Perth/Longford	selling out	1861
Hyrons, John	Launceston/Perth/Longford	mail contract	1864
Hyrons & Harris	Launceston/Longford	Omnibus, special - show	1867
Ikin, W.	Hobart	Mail coach and horses for Theatre Royal	1892
Jack, W.	Hobart/Richmond	bought Bailey	1884
Jack, W.	Richmond/Hobart	mail coach	1885
Jacobs	Kangaroo Point/Richmond		1878
Jacobs, J.	Cambridge/Richmond	coach proprietor	1915
James, W.	Hamilton/New Norfolk		1855
Jeffrey, H.	Hobart Town/Huon	Jeffrey & Co	1876
Johnson, John	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Industry*	1845
Johnston, James	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Union*	1839
Johnston, James	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Prince Albert*	1841
Johnstone	Hobart/Battery Point	Omnibus	1898
Jones & Turner	Launceston	Omnibus, *Surprise,* specials then dissolved	1865
Jones	Launceston	Omnibuses, Turner & Jones	1884
Jordan	Launceston/Carrick	*Express*	1872
Jory, M.	Launceston/Beaconsfield		1898
Jory, W.B.	Launceston/Beaconsfield		1881
Jory, W.B.	Launceston/Lefroy		1882
Joyce, Joseph	Launceston/Perth/Longford	license	1850
Keep	Deloraine/Latrobe	Spearman, Keep & Co	1881
Keep	Deloraine/Latrobe	Spearman, Keep & Co dissolved	1883
Kelly, E.C. Mrs	Queenstown/Gormanston/Linda Valley		1906
Kempling, James	Waratah/Whyte River	mail coach	1892
Kerr	Zeehan/Dundas	Andrew Bros & Kerr	1891
Lanaghan, W.	Bellerive/Sorell	mail contract (1876)	1874
Lapham, Edward	Hobart Town/Launceston	license	1852
Lawson, Thomas	Launceston/Perth/Longford	bought Lyall & Ritchie	1852
Lawson, Thomas	Launceston/Perth/Longford/Cressy		1864
Lawson, Thomas	Launceston/Perth/Longford/Cressy	Lawson, Cox & Co	1865
Leech	Scottsdale	Biggs & Leech, license	1913
Lewis	Richmond/Hobart Town		1870
Loone	Launceston/Scottsdale/Branxholm	Loone & Bonner	1886
Lord, James	Hobart Town/Launceston	*Tally-Ho*	1852
Lord, James	Hobart Town/Launceston	Lord & Co, *Tally-Ho, Harkaway,* d 1881	1854
Lowe, G	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Eclipse,* Lowe & Mills, 4h	1831
Lucas		New Norfolk Coach	1855
Lucas, N. & T.	special	*Perseverance*	1857
Lucas, N. & S.	special	Messrs Lucas	1858
Lucas, N. & T.	special		1860
Lucas, Thomas		insolvent	1862
Ludby	Hobart/Sandfly (Huon Road)		1887
Lyall, Robert	George Town/Hobart Town	license, with Motton, William	1852
Lyall, Robert	Deloraine/Launceston	Lyall, Pascoe, Motton & Thomas	1852
Lyall, Robert	Launceston/Perth/Longford	Lyall & Ritchie bought John Hyrons	1852
Lyall, Robert	Launceston/Westbury		1852
Lyall, Robert	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine	Wells £50 share	1859
McCartney, Edward	Hobart Town/New Town	Omnibus, *Lady Don*	1862
McDermott, A.	Bellerive/Sandford/South Arm		1894
McGlade, W.	Burnie	license	1906
McLaren	Ulverstone/Upper Castra//North Motton	mail coaches	1909

McMichael, George	Scottsdale/St Mary's	Thompson & McMichael	1906
McMichael, George	Scottsdale/Ringarooma/Branxholm/Derby	mail coach	1909
Maddox, C.	Latrobe	license	1904
Marshall	Devonport	specials	1919
Marshall, Benjamin	Oatlands/Launceston	license	1849
Martin, J	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	Van	1826
Martin, J	Richmond/Hobart Town	*Tasmanian*	1845
Martin, ?	New Norfolk/Hobart Town		1848
Martin, William Fox	Richmond/Hobart Town	*Despatch*	1844
Martin, William Fox	New Norfolk/Hobart Town		1852
Mead	Hobart/Cascades	Omnibus, Burbury & Mead	1884
Mead	Hobart	Omnibuses	1894
Millward, William	Hobart Town/Launceston	Brown & Millward, license	1853
Mills, George	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Perseverance* (1844)	1835
Mills, George	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Perseverance ('again'), d 1849*	1849
Mills, J	Evandale/Launceston		1845
Mills, Mahala	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	widow of George Mills	1849
Mills, Mahala	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Perseverance*	1849
Mills, Mahala	New Norfolk/Hobart Town		1853
Mills, Mahala	Green Ponds/Hobart Town		1853
Mills, P	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Eclipse,* Lowe & Mills, 4h	1831
Mills, Thomas William	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	proprietor, then icw Fisher	1856
Mills, T.	Green Ponds	stage-coach proprietor	1875
Monk, James	Hobart Town/New Town	Omnibus	1872
Moore	Green Ponds/Hobart Town		1865
Moore, Joseph	Launceston/*Grazier's Delight*	*Perseverance*, connect to Perth	1835
Morrison, John	Evandale/Launceston	*Morrison's Conveyance*	1846
Morrison, John	Evandale/Launceston	*Royal Oak*	1851
Morrison, Mrs	Evandale/Launceston	*Morrison's Conveyance*	until 1852
Morrison, William	Campbell Town/Falmouth		1855
Motton, William	Launceston/Westbury	*Morning Star*	1848
Motton, William	George Town/Hobart Town	license, with Lyall, Robert	1852
Nichol	Richmond/Hobart Town		1880
Nickolls, Henry	Hobart Town/Launceston	Mail cart	1832
O'Donnell, Daniel	Westbury/Launceston	*Industry*	1845
O'Donnell, Daniel	Westbury/Launceston	*Wonder*	1846
O'Donnell, Daniel	Evandale/Launceston	*Wonder*	1846
O'Donnell, Daniel	Deloraine/Launceston	Insolvent 1849	1846
O'Donnell, Daniel	Launceston/Westbury	restart	1854
Olive, John	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Victoria*	1845
Olive, John	Oatlands/Hobart Town	*Victoria*	1845
O'Neill, J.	Emu Bay/Latrobe		1879
O'Neill, J.	Deloraine/Emu Bay	Huett & O'Neill, partnership/coordination?	1883
Owen, Thomas	Launceston	Omnibus	1888
Owen, Thomas	Launceston/Evandale	special - Xmas Fair	1891
Owen, Thomas	Launceston	Owen & Spearman, Omnibus merger	1896
Owen, Thomas	Burnie	Owen & Spearman, license	1901
Owen, Thomas	Launceston electrification	Owen & Spearman, last horse omnibus	1911
Page, Louisa Jessie	Fingal	coach proprietress, bankrupt, d 1929	1893
Page, Samuel	Oatlands/Hobart Town	*Comet*	1848
Page, Samuel	Hobart Town/Launceston	*Comet*	1848
Page, Samuel	Hobart Town/Launceston	partnership (son) dissolved	1861
Page, Samuel	Hobart Town/Victoria (Huon)		1869
Page, Samuel	Hobart Town/Victoria (Huon)	Parsons, Page & Parsons	1872
Page, Samuel	Oatlands/Hobart Town		1873
Page, Samuel	Campbell Town/Fingal/Falmouth	bought Smith, arrangements unchanged	1873
Page, Samuel	Launceston/Fingal		1874
Page, Samuel	Hobart Town/Oatlands		1877
Page, Samuel	northern plant	sold	1877
Page, Samuel	southern plant	sold, d1878	1878
Page, Samuel jnr	Hobart Town/Launceston		1858
Page, Samuel jnr	Hobart Town/Launceston	partnership (father) dissolved	1861
Page, Samuel jnr	Corners/Falmouth/George's Bay	bought Page	1876
Page, Samuel jnr	George's Bay/Moorina		1887
Page, Samuel jnr	Oatlands	special - races [Sydney Page, Sec]	1888
Page, Samuel jnr	George's Bay, Fingal	bankrupt	1892
Page, Samuel jnr	Fingal/Mathinna	d 1927	1895

Page, Sydney	Macquarie Stn/Lake St Clair/Gormanston	one season only	1897
Parker, John	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Fairplay*	1832
Parsons, Page & Parsons	Hobart Town/Victoria (Huon)	Page, Samuel	1872
Pascoe, James	Deloraine/Launceston	Lyall, Pascoe, Motton & Thomas	1852
Pascoe, James	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine	Pascoe & Co	1860
Peevor, C.	Ringarooma	license	1913
Petrie, Charles	Lefroy/George Town	meet steamer	1881
Petty, William	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	Partner in Cooper & Co, *Victoria*	1846
Petty, William	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	*Regulator,* insolvent 1848	1847
Polley	Fingal/Mathinna		1909
Poole	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine		1864
Porthouse	Hobart	Omnibus	1890
Powell, Alice Ann	Cressy	mail coach, proprietress	1906
Presnell, William	Black Snake/Hobart Town		1831
Prior, F.H.	Launceston/Beaconsfield	mail coach	1884
Rainsford, A.	Oatlands/Lamont	mail coach	1922
Raynor, E.W.	Gretna	excursion, Macquarie Plains	1889
Rees, E.J.	Sheffield	license	1915
Reynolds, Edwin	Green Ponds	proprietor	1888
Reynolds, Edwin	Brighton Stn/Green Ponds/Bothwell	branch to Broadmarsh	1889
Reynolds	Campania Stn/Spring Bay/Swansea	mail coach	1893
Reynolds, William	Brighton/Hobart Town		1875
Reynolds, William	Hobart Town/Kempton [Green Ponds]		1876
Richardson	Campbell Town/Swansea		1901
Ritchie	Launceston/Perth/Longford	Lyall & Ritchie bought John Hyrons	1852
Roberts, James	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	*Reliance (wef 1832)*	1830
Roberts	Launceston/Westbury		1865
Roberts	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine		1866
Robertson, Wagner & Co	Hobart Town/Launceston	mail contract, but did not start	1867
Robinson	Sorell/Orford/Swansea	Hill & Robinson, mail coach	1901
Robinson	Triabunna/Buckland	Hill & Robinson, mail coach	1905
Robinson	Campbell Town/Swansea	Hill & Robinson	1905
Robinson	Campbell Town/Lake Leake	special - fishing	1908
Robinson	Buckland	special - concert	1911
Robinson, George William	Black Snake/Hobart Town	Omnibus	1833
Rometch	Hobart	tourist excursions	1903
Rometch	Hobart/Franklin/Geeveston	Rometch & Duncan	1904
Rometch	Huon	Rometch & Duncan, excursions	1905
Rometch	Huon	Webster, Rometch & Co	1911
Rometch	Huon	Webster, Rometch & Duncan, mail coach	1912
Ruffin, Richard	Perth/Launceston		1835
Ruffin, Richard	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Fair Play*	1840
Rule	Hobart/Brown's River	Fisher & Rule	1892
Rule, H.J.	Hobart/Brown's River		1899
Rule, H.J.	Hobart/Brown's River		1902
Rule, H.J.	Hobart/Kingston	special	1908
Ryley	Richmond/Hobart Town		1864
Scott, Thomas	Green Ponds/Bothwell		1858
Simmons, William	Launceston/Mowbray	operating unlicensed	1871
Smith, Edward	Scottsdale/Derby/Moorina		1891
Smith, Garnet	Launceston/Carrick	weekly	1906
Smith, James	Torquay/Latrobe/Deloraine	*Enterprise*	1858
Smith, John	Corners/Falmouth	mail contract	1864
Smith, John	Campbell Town/Fingal - Mangana		1870
Smith, John	Launceston/Fingal	Smith & Co	1872
Smith, John	Launceston/Fingal	Omnibus	1873
Smith, John	Campbell Town/Fingal/Falmouth	sold to Samuel Page	1873
Smith, J.T.	Launceston/Nine Mile Springs		1874
Smith, J.T.	Launceston/Nine Mile Springs	Smith & Watts partnership dissolved	1877
Smith	Launceston/Beaconsfield	mail coach	1887
Smithies, J.R.	Burnie/Ulverstone		1900
Solomon, David	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Hero, Fair-Play, Conqueror (1848)*	1847
Solomon, David	Bishopsbourne/Longford	*Wonder*	1847
Solomon, David	Evandale/Launceston	*Wonder*	1848
Solomon, David	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Teazer, Terror*	1849
Solomon, David	Hobart Town/Launceston	license	1853
Solomon, David	Launceston/Perth/Longford	*Dispatch,* intent	1854

Solomon, David	Launceston/Perth/Longford	bought Avery's interest	1856
Southall	Launceston/Mangana	*Escort,* Turner & Southall	1870
Southall, J.	Launceston/Fingal	*Eclipse, Escort*	1871
Southerwood, W.J.	Launceston/Beaconsfield		1890
Southerwood, W.J.	Launceston/Lefroy		1893
Southerwood, W.J.	Launceston Omnibus and Tramway Co	purchaser	1894
Southerwood, W.J.	Launceston/Beaconsfield	night	1904
Southerwood, W.J.	Launceston/Beaconsfield//Lefroy	Southerwoods Buses & Coaches	1907
Southerwood, W.J.	Launceston/Trevallyn	horse omnibus	1911
Southerwood, W.J.	Launceston/Beaconsfield	motorised	1913
Southerwood, W.J.	Launceston	sold remaining horses and vehicles	1915
Spearman, Henry	Deloraine/Latrobe	Spearman, Keep & Co	1881
Spearman, Henry	Deloraine/Latrobe	Spearman, Keep & Co dissolved	1883
Spearman, Henry	Launceston	Omnibus	1894
Spearman, Henry	Launceston	Owen & Spearman, Omnibus merger	1896
Spearman, Henry	Launceston electrification	Owen & Spearman, last horse omnibus	1911
Spearman, William	Deloraine/Westbury/Launceston		1855
Spearman, William	Deloraine/Westbury/Launceston	bought Ayton	1855
Spearman, William	Launceston/Perth/Longford		1859
Spearman, William	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine	Spearman & East	1864
Spearman, William	Deloraine/Latrobe	mail, from railhead	1876
Spearman, William	Launceston/Lefroy		1882
Spearman, William	Deloraine/Latrobe	sold to Huett	1881
Spearman, William	Launceston/Lefroy	bought Gamble	1881
Spearman	Gladstone	meet steamer	1883
Spearman	Launceston/Beaconsfield		1884
Spearman, W.J.	Launceston/Ringarooma		1884
Spearman	Burnie	Owen & Spearman, license	1901
Stace, Thomas Hollis	Hobart Town/North-West bay		1852
Stott, W.H.	Latrobe	license	1903
Stott, Walter	Latrobe	license	1906
Strong, James	Hobart Town/Launceston	not RPT	1840
Stubbs, C.H.	Campbell Town/Cressy	mail coach	1909
Stubbs, Charles Henicker	Cressy	coach proprietor, insolvent	1913
Sullivan, John	Hobart Town/Launceston	license	1852
Sutcliffe	Bellerive/Rokeby/Sandford		1912
Tatlow, Charles	Wynyard/Stanley		1901
Tatlow, Charles	& Stanley/Smithton/Irishtown/Montagu		1909
Tatlow, Charles	Burnie/Wynyard/Stanley/Smithton	partially motorised, specials	1919
Terry, A.	Ringarooma	license	1913
Terry, E.	Scottsdale/Gladstone	license	1902
Thomas, John	Deloraine/Launceston	Lyall, Pascoe, Motton & Thomas	1852
Thompson, Thomas	Green Ponds/Hobart Town	(Brown & Thompson) insolvent 1856	1855
Thompson, W.J.	Launceston/Westbury/Deloraine	*Perseverance*	1846
Thompson	Sorell	excursion, Thompson Bros	1887
Thompson Bros	Sorell/Dunally	mail coach	1891
Thompson	St Helens/St Mary's/Derby/Mathinna	mail coach	1900
Thomson, J.W.		coaching line in the north	1893
Thompson, W.J.	Scottsdale/St Mary's	Thompson & McMichael	1906
Thompson, J.W.	St Helens	mail coach, proprietor	1908
Thompson, J.W.	St Helens	mail motors	1909
Thompson, J.W.	Lottah	reinstated horses due weather	1911
Thompson	Weldborough	horse coach proprietor	1910
Tremaine, J.	Oatlands/rail connections	special - Hobart Show	1900
Tremaine, J.	Parattah/Oatlands	and excursions to Lakes	1906
Tremaine, J.	Oatlands/Melton	special - sale	1911
Trowbridge, J.T.	Derby/Scottsdale		1894
Turner	Bellerive/Sorell		1874
Turner (Jones & Turner)	Launceston	Omnibus, *Surprise*, specials then dissolved	1865
Turner	Launceston	Omnibuses, Turner & Jones	1884
Turner, H.	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington		1896
Turner, William	Launceston	engaged Charles Cooley	1868
Turner [William]	special	*Victoria*	1870
Turner & Southall	Launceston/Mangana	*Victoria* renamed *Escort*	1870
Turner, William	Launceston/Hobart Town	Break, special, Hobart Town races	1868
Turner, William	Nile/Evandale/Launceston	bought Gray	1874
Turner, William	Launceston/Evandale/Lymington		1875

Turner, W.	Burnie	license	1900
Tyler, James	Hobart/Sorell	bought Hill	1882
Upton, J.G.	Deloraine/Torquay		1865
Veitch	Launceston/Perth		1845
Ward, Charles	North Hobart Omnibus	bought Burbury	1889
Ward, Charles	Hobart	Omnibus	1890
Warren	Hobart	Omnibuses	1899
Watson, George	Westbury/Launceston		1848
Watts, F.	Launceston/Nine Mile Springs	Smith & Watts partnership dissolved	1877
Webb	Launceston/Fingal	*Eclipse*	1873
Webb, Daniel jnr	Campbell Town/Fingal		1873
Webb, John	Hobart Town/Launceston	Imported two omnibuses, did not start, d1831	1831
Webster	Hobart Town/Huon	mail coach	1880
Webster	Hobart/Franklin/Honeywood	Huon, mail coach	1891
Webster, K.L.	Huon Coaches	K.L. Webster and Co	1893
Webster, Rometch & Co	Huon	Webster, Rometch & Co	1911
Webster, Rometch & Duncan	Huon	Webster, Rometch & Duncan, mail coach	1912
Webster, Rometch & Duncan	Hobart/Huon	last horse coach on route	1913
Webster, W. & F.	Hobart/Sorell	special - races	1881
Wells	Bellerive/Sorell		1878
Wells, Henry	Deloraine/Westbury/Launceston	Ayton & Wells, *Shamrock*	1854
White, P.	Hobart	Omnibuses	1909
White, W.J.	Ringarooma	mail coach	1910
White, W.J.	Ringarooma	license	1913
Williams, E.	Launceston/Westbury		1903
Wilson, J.T.	Sheffield/Railton	mail coach	1887
Wilson, William	Hobart Town/Launceston	(Cleveland) License	1857
Wise, G	New Norfolk/Hobart Town	G. Wise, P. Mills & Co, *Eclipse, Tally-Ho*	1832
Wiseman, J.	Formby/Table Cape/Circular Head		1887
Wiseman, Thomas	Burnie	license	1900
Worsley	Hobart Town/North-West bay		1864
Yeend	Hobart Town/Huon	mail coach	1878
Young	Bellerive/Rokeby/Sandford		1914

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Batman, John, *Diary of John Batman* (Dixson Library: State Library of New South Wales, 1830).

Beeton's, *All About Everything* (Beeton's All About It Books. Eighth ed. Melbourne: Ward, Lock and Co).

Bigge, John Thomas, *Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry, on the State of Agriculture and Trade in the Colony of New South Wales* (1823).

Bladen, F.M., *Historical Records of New South Wales* (Sydney: Government Printer, 1893).

Bronte, Charlotte, *Jane Eyre* (London: Laurel Press, 1987. First published 1847).

Burgess, James W., *Practical Treatise on Coach-Building* (London: Crosby, Lockwood and Co., 1881).

Cash, Martin, *Martin Cash : The Bushranger of Van Diemen's Land in 1843. A Personal Narrative of His Exploits in the Bush and His Experiences at Port Arthur and Norfolk Island* (1st ed. Hobart Town: J. Walch & Sons, 1870).

Clausewitz, Carl von., *On War* (Penguin Classics 1982. London: Penguin Group. First published 1832).

Cockburn, F.J., *Letters from the Southern Hemisphere* (Calcutta?: 1856). http://nla.gov.au/nla.aus-f8407.

Cockton, Peter, *Subject Catalogue of the House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1801-1900* (Cambridge, England: Chadwyck-Healey, 1988).

Colonial Secretary's Office, *CSO 24/1/227/8710* (Hobart: Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office, 1853).

Cox, John Edward, *Probate of, and Last Will and Testament*, *Ad960/1/1, P247 No 132* (Hobart: Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office, 1837).

Curr, Edward, and T.E. Wells, *An Account of the Colony of Van Diemen's Land Principally Designed for the Use of Emigrants* (London: George Cowie, 1824).

Dickens, Charles, *Bleak House* (New York: President Publishing Co, 1868. First published 1853).

———. *Nicholas Nickleby* (London: Tiger Books, 1991. First published 1839).

———. *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club, with Illustrations, after Phiz* (Launceston, Van Diemen's Land: Henry Dowling, 1838).

Dover, Thomas and John Wilson, *Articles of Agreement Dated 20 June 1793 in POST 10/251* (British Post Office Archive).

Eliot, George, *Adam Bede* (London: Thames Publishing Company, 1960).

Eliot, George, *Middlemarch* (New York: Random House, 1992. First published 1872).

Franklin, J. *C.O. 280/77, Despatch 23, 4 March 1837* (Hobart: Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office, 1837).

Gaskell, Mrs., *The Life of Charlotte Bronte* (London: Smith, Elder and Co, 1885).

General Post Office, *A Return… of Each Newspaper Publication Passing Free by Post… Dated 29 December 1845. Hobart Town, Van Diemen's Land, 1845 in POST 44/10* (British Post Office Archive).

General Post Office, *A Return of All Contracts for the Conveyance of Mails in the Colony of Van Diemen's Land During the Year 1845. Hobart Town, Van Diemen's Land, 1845 in POST 44/4*, (British Post Office Archive).

Gritten, Henry, *Main Road at New Town… Stage-coach in landscape* (Collection: Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston, Tasmania, 1856).

The Hobart Town Gazette, (Hobart Town: Government Printer, 1825-1880).

Hobkirk, J.F., *Reminiscences of J.F. Hobkirk* (Launceston: Examiner, 1904).

Hughes, Thomas, *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971. First published 1856).

Knopwood, Robert, Mary Nicholls, and Tasmanian Historical Research Association, *The Diary of the Reverend Robert Knopwood, 1803-1838 : First Chaplain of Van Diemen's Land* (Sandy Bay, Tas.: Tasmanian Historical Research Association, 1977).

Lycett, Joseph, *Views in Australia or New South Wales & Van Diemen's Land Delineated: In Fifty Views, with Descriptive Letter Press* (Melbourne: Thomas Nelson [facsimile of 1824 original], 1971).

Macquarie, Lachlan, and Phyllis Mander-Jones, *Lachlan Macquarie, Governor of New South Wales : Journals of His Tours in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land 1810-1822* (Sydney: Trustees of the Public Library of New South Wales, 1956).

Malet, Harold Esdaile, and Nimrod, *Annals of the Road : Or, Notes on Mail and Stage Coaching in Great Britain* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1876).

Melville, Henry, *The History of the Island of Van Diemen's Land, from the Year 1824 to 1835 Inclusive, to Which Is Added a Few Words on Prison Discipline* Edited by George Mackaness, Australiana Facsimile Editions, (Sydney: Horwitz-Grahame, 1965).

Moore, J., *The Hobart Town Directory and General Guide* (Hobart Town: J. Moore, 1852).

Mundy, Godfrey Charles, *Our Antipodes, or, Residence and Rambles in the Australasian Colonies: With a Glimpse of the Gold Fields* (London: Richard Bentley, 1852).

Prinsep, Mrs Augustus, *Illustrations of Prinsep's Journal of a Voyage from Calcutta to Van Diemen's Land : From Original Sketches Taken During the Years 1829 and 1830* (London: Smith & Elder, 1833).

Ryan, James T., *Reminiscences of Australia... Containing 70 Years of His Own Knowledge, and 35 Years of His Ancestors* (Sydney: George Robertson, 1895).

Savery, Henry, and Cecil Hadgraft, *The Hermit in Van Diemen's Land* (St. Lucia, Qld.: University of Queensland Press, 1964. First published 1829).

Select Committee on Transportation, *Report from the Select Committee on Transportation* House of Commons, Parliamentary Papers. (London: 1812).

Smith, Adam, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (New York: The Classics of Liberty Library, 1994. First published 1776).

———. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments. The Glasgow Edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith; Vol. 1* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976. First published 1759).

Smith, F.C., *A Statement of the Net Revenue… for the Year Ended 31 December 1844 in POST 44/14* (British Post Office Archive).

Smith, F.C., Edward James, and B. Richard Smith, *Report: The Post Office in Van Diemen's Land in POST 44/20* (British Post Office Archive, 1846).

Thompson, Flora, *Lark Rise to Candleford* (London: The Folio Society, 2009. First published 1945).
Tregurtha, Edward Primrose, and Dan Sprod, *The Tregurtha Log: Relating the Adventurous Life of Capt. Edward Primrose Tregurtha: The Napoleonic Wars, the East India Company's China Run, Whaling in the South Seas, Shipmaster to the Port Philip District* (Hobart: Blubber Head Press, 1980).
Trollope, Anthony, *Australia and New Zealand* (London: Dawsons, 1968).
Watson, Frederick, *Historical Records of Australia. Series III, Despatches and Papers Relating to the Settlement of the States* (Sydney: Library Committee of the Commonwealth Parliament, 1921).
West, John, and A.G.L. Shaw, *The History of Tasmania : With Copious Information Respecting the Colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia &C., &C., &C*. (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1981. First published 1852).
Youatt, William, *The Horse* (London: Routledge, Warne, & Routledge, 1860).

Almanacs

Bent, Andrew, ed., *The Van Diemen's Land Pocket Almanack...* (Hobart Town: Government Printer, 1824).
Ross, James, *The Hobart Town Almanack, for the Year 1829. With Six Copper Plate Engravings* (Hobart Town: 1829).
Ross, James, *Hobart Town Almanack and Van Diemen's Land Annual for 1835* (Hobart Town: 1835).
Walch, J., *Walch's Tasmanian Almanack* (Hobart Town: J. Walch & Sons, 1862-90).
———. *Walch's Tasmanian Almanack* (Hobart Town: J. Walch & Sons, 1891).
———. *Walch's Tasmanian Almanack* (Hobart Town: J. Walch & Sons, 1906).
Wood, James, ed., *Van Diemen's Land Royal Kalendar, Colonial Register, and Almanack* (Launceston: Henry Dowling, 1848).

Legislation

The Parliament of Great Britain, *An Act for Limiting the Number of Persons to Be Carried on the Outside of Stage Coaches or Other Carriages* (28, George III, c. 57, 1788).
———. *An Act to Alter, Explain and Amend an Act, Made in the Twenty-Eighth Year of the Reign of His Present Majesty, Intituled, an Act for Limiting the Number of Persons to Be Carried on the Outside of Stage Coaches or Other Carriages, and for Regulating the Conduct of the Drivers and Guards Thereof* (30, George III, c. 36, 1790).
House of Commons, *A Bill... for Limiting the Number of Persons to Be Carried on the Outside of Stage Coaches or Other Carriages, and for Other Purposes Relating Thereto. Cockton 1810 (287) I.463 mf 11.5, pp. 463-77* (1810).
———. *A Bill for the More Effectual Prevention of the Mischief Occasioned by the Inconsiderate Driving of Stage Coaches, and Other Public Conveyances. Cockton 1816 (461) II.749 mf 17.8, pp. 749-53* (1816).
———. *A Bill for Punishing Criminally Drivers of Stage Coaches and Carriages, for Accidents Occasioned by Their Negligence or Misconduct. Cockton 1820 (59) I.23 mf 22.1, pp. 23-24* (1820).
———. *A Bill to Amend an Act of the 50th Year of His Late Majesty Relating to Stage Coaches, and the Power to Select for Prosecution the Proprietors of Such Stage Coaches, in Certain Cases. Cockton 1822 (434) III.1687 mf 24.18, pp. 1687-88* (1822).

———. *A Bill for the Better Administration of Justice in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, and for the More Effectual Government Thereof, and for Other Purposes. Cockton 1823 (522) III.571 mf 25.24-25, pp. 571-93* (1823).
———. *A Bill to Make Further Regulations Relating to the Licensing of Stage Coaches. Cockton 1826 (271) II.23 mf 28.8, pp. 23-32* (1826).
———. *A Bill to Amend an Act of the Fiftieth Year of King George the Third, for Regulating Stage Coaches, and for the More Effectual Promoting the Safety of Passengers by Stage Coaches. Cockton 1830-31 (70) II.369 mf 33.11, pp. 369-70* (1830).
———. *A Bill for the More Effectual Protection of Mail Contractors, Stage Coach Proprietors, and Other Common Carriers for Hire, against the Loss of or Injury to Parcels or Packages Delivered to Them for Coveyance or Custody, the Value and Contents of Which Shall Not Be Declared to Them by the Owners Thereof. Cockton 1830 (622) III.315 mf 32.16, pp. 315-18* (1830).
———. *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the Post Office Department. Cockton 1835 (313) XLVIII.399 mf 38.380-81, pp. 399-499* (1835).
The Governor of New South Wales and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council, *An Act for Regulating Stage Carriages in New South Wales* (6, William IV, No 2 [NSW], Sydney: Government Publisher, 1835).
———. *An Act for Punishing Criminally Drivers of Stage Coaches and Carriages for Accidents Occasioned by Their Wilful Misconduct* (13, Victoria, No 5 [NSW], Sydney: Government Publisher, 1849).
His Excellency Colonel George Arthur, Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies, with the advice of the Legislative Council, *An Act for Regulating the Sale of Wine, and of Beer, Rum, and Other Malt and Spirituous Liquors, by Retail:—and Promoting Good Order in Public Houses* (9, George IV, No 2, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1828).
———. *An Act to Provide for the Temporary Conveyance and Postage of Letters* (9, George IV, No 6, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1828).
———. *An Act for the Relief of Certain Insolvent Debtors* (11, George IV, No 4, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1830).
———. *An Act to Amend and Consolidate the Laws Providing for the Conveyance and Postage of Letters* (4, William IV, No 18, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1834).
———. *An Act to Provide for the Licensing of Hawkers and Carriers* (6, William IV, No 7, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1835).
———. *An Act for the Regulation of Stage Coaches* (6, William IV, No 12, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1836).
His Excellency Sir John Franklin Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council *An Act for the Better Prevention of Cruelty to Animals* (8, William IV, No 3, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1837).
———. *An Act to Regulate the Police in Certain Towns and Ports within the Island of Van Diemen's Land...* (2, Victoria, No 22, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1838).
———. *An Act for Making and Maintaining a Bridge over the South Esk River at Norfolk Plains* (3, Victoria, No 7, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1839).
———. *An Act for Erecting and Maintaining a Bridge across the River Derwent in the Township of New Norfolk in the County of Buckingham* (3, Victoria, No 8, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1839.

———. *An Act for the Making Altering Improving and Defining the Main and Other Roads of This Island* (4, Victoria, No 35, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1840).

———. *An Act for the Regulation of Vehicles Conveying Passengers for Hire within Towns of This Island* (6, Victoria, No 4, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1842).

———. *An Act for Making and Maintaining a Bridge over the South Esk River at Reibey's Ford* (6, Victoria, No 8, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1842).

His Excellency Sir John Eardley Eardley-Wilmot Baronet Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the Advice of the Legislative Council, *An Act for the Better Regulation and Maintenance of the Main Road from the City of Hobart Town to Launceston* (10, Victoria, No 12, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1846).

His Excellency Sir William Thomas Denison Knight Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the Advice of the Legislative Council *An Act to Repeal the Act of Council of This Island Intituled an Act for the Regulation of Vehicles Conveying Passengers for Hire within the Towns of This Island and to Substitute Other Provisions in Lieu Thereof* (12, Victoria, No 6, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1848).

———. *An Act for Constructing Regulating and Maintaining Certain Cross and Bye Roads in the Island of Van Diemen's Land* (15, Victoria, No 8, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1852).

———. *An Act to Regulate the Conveyance and Postage of Letters. [31st August, 1853]* (17, Victoria, No 6, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1853).

His Excellency Sir Henry Edward Fox Young, Knight, Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of the Island of Tasmania and its Dependencies with the Advice and Consent of the Legislative Council *An Act to Amend the Law Relating to Masters, Servants, and Apprentices. [7th February, 1856]* (19, Victoria, No 28, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1856).

His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly in Parliament *An Act to Amend the Act for the Regulation of Stage Coaches. [4 October, 1860]* (24, Victoria, No 25, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1860).

———. *An Act to Consolidate and Amend the Laws Relating to the Police Government of Municipalities and Municipal Districts, and for Other Purposes Relating Thereto. [29 September 1865]* (29, Victoria, No 10, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1865).

———. *An Act to Amend the Police Act, 1865. [11 October 1867]* (31, Victoria, No 18, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1867).

———. *An Act to Amend the Law Relating to Advance Made to Agents Intrusted with Goods. [17 September, 1868]* (32, Victoria, No 13, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1868).

———. *An Act to Provide for the Distribution of the Assets of Insolvent Debtors Amongst the Creditors. [18 October, 1870]* (34, Victoria, No 32, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1870).

———. *An Act for the More Effectual Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. [11 December 1877]* (41, Victoria, No 17, Hobart: Hobart Town Gazette, 1877).

Newspapers

Advocate, (Burnie: 1890-1954).
Colonial Times and Tasmanian Advertiser, (Hobart Town: 1825-1827).
Colonial Times, (Hobart Town: A. Bent, 1828-1857).
The Cornwall Chronicle, (Launceston: William Lushington Goodwin, 1835-1880).
The Courier, (Hobart Town: St. Davids, 1840-1859).
The Examiner, (Launceston: 1900-).
The Hobarton Mercury, (Hobart Town: George A. Jones and John Davies, 1854-57).
The Hobart Town Courier, (Hobart Town: 1827-1839).
The Hobart Town Daily Mercury, (Hobart Town: John Davies, 1858-1860).
The Hobart Town Gazette and Southern Reporter, (Hobart Town: Government Printer, 1816-1821).
Hobart Town Gazette and Van Diemen's Land Advertiser, (Hobart Town: 1821-1825).
The Hobart Town Mercury, (Hobart Town: John Davies, 1857).
Huon Times, (Franklin, Tas.: 1910 – 1933).
The Illustrated London News.
The Independent, (Launceston: 1831-1835).
Launceston Advertiser, (Launceston: John Fawkner, 1829-1846).
Launceston Courier, (Launceston: John Knight, 1840-1843).
Launceston Examiner, (Launceston: 1842-1899).
The Mercury, (Hobart: John Davies, 1860-).
North-Eastern Advertiser, (Scottsdale, Tas.: 1909-1954).
The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, (Sydney, NSW: 1803-1842).
The Tasmanian and Austral-Asiatic Review, (Hobart Town: 1827-1837).
Zeehan and Dundas Herald, (Zeehan: William Lawrence Calder and Joseph Bowden, 1890-1922).

Convict Records

Founders and Survivors,
———. "Francis Atkinson." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31010231.
———. "Samuel Barrett." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31031103.
———. "Mark Brooker." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31011252.
———. "Thomas Burbury." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31050083.
———. "David William Bush." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31010373.
———. "George Chalker." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/ai11606.
———. "Henry Clayton." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31060409.
———. "Robert Couling." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31060155.
———. "William Cutts." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31060482.

———. "John Davis." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31090378.
———. "George Dudfield." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31090382.
———. "CharlesEdwards." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/ai21276.
———. "Joseph Fisher." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31140060.
———. "George Frost." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31140250.
———. "William Gerrard." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31160647.
———. "Edward Greenbank." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31160180.
———. "William Buelow Gould." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31150397.
———. "Goodman Hart." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31220361.
———. "Samuel Hedditch." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31180128.
———. "James Hewitt." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31190251.
———. "Benjamin Hines [Hyrons]." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31180097.
———. "James Horman." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31210415.
———. "William Martin." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31290511.
———. "John Morrison." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31290512.
———. "Samuel Page." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31360281.
———. "John Parker." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31340032.
———. "Frederick Peers." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/ai55576.
———. "David Solomon." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31380464.
———. "Mark Solomon." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31380100.
———. "Joseph Thorn." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31420181.
———. "William Thornhill." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31420232.
———. "James Whitehead." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/c31a31480023.
———. "James Williams." http://foundersandsurvivors.org/pubsearch/convict/chain/om5288.

Secondary Sources

Adnum, V.B., *A History of the Post Office in Tasmania* (Hobart: Australian Post Office, 1975).

Alexander, Alison, *The Southern Midlands - a History* (Burwood, Vic.: Southern Midlands Council, 2012).

———. *Tasmania's Convicts : How Felons Built a Free Society* (Crows Nest, N.S.W.: Allen & Unwin, 2010).

Allen, Susan, 'Lord, David (1785–1847)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1967).

Anderson, Hugh, 'Fawkner, John Pascoe (1792–1869)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1966).

Atkinson, Alan, *The Europeans in Australia: Democracy, 3 vols., vol. 2* (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Atlas of Tasmania, Edited by J.L. Davies (Hobart: Tasmanian Lands and Surveys Department, 1965).

Austin, Kenneth Ashurst, *A Pictorial History of Cobb & Co: The Coaching Age in Australia, 1854-1924* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1977).

Belich, James, *Replenishing the Earth: the Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-world, 1783-1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Bennett, Scott, 'Lewis, Sir Neil Elliott (1858–1935)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1986).

Bishop, Catherine, *Minding Her Own Business: Colonial Businesswomen in Sydney* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2015).

Blainey, Geoffrey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance shaped Australia's History* (Melbourne: Sun Books, 1982).

Boyce, James, *Van Diemen's Land* (Melbourne: Black Inc., 2008).

Briggs, M., and P. Jordan, *Economic History of England* 12th ed., (London: University Tutorial Press, 1967).

Brown, P.L., 'Austin, Thomas (1815–1871)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1966).

Burbury, A.W., *Chronicles of the Burbury Family in Tasmania and England* (Austin's Ferry, Tasmania, 1939).

Butlin, N.G., *Forming a Colonial Economy, Australia 1810-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

———. *Investment in Australian Economic Development 1861-1900* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1964).

Chamberlain, Brian R., *The Launceston and Western Railway Company Ltd., 1867-1904* (Launceston, Tas.: Regal Press, 1985).

Cheshire, G.C., and C.H.S. Fifoot, *The Law of Contract* Sixth ed., (London: Butterworths, 1964).

Clements, Nicholas, *The Black War: Fear, Sex and Resistance in Tasmania* (Saint Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2014).

Crofts, John Ernest Victor, *Packhorse, Waggon and Post: Land Carriage and Communications under the Tudors and Stuarts* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967).

Cuffley, Peter, *Buggies and Horse-Drawn Vehicles in Australia* (Lilydale, Vic.: Pioneer Design Studio, 1981).

Currey, John, *David Collins: A Colonial Life* (Carlton South, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 2000).

Dallas, K.M., *Horsepower* (Hobart: Fullers Bookshop, 1968).
Everingham, Sam, *Wild Ride - the Rise and Fall of Cobb & Co* (Camberwell, Victoria, Australia: Penguin, 2007).
Everitt, A., ed., *Perspectives in English Urban History* (Macmillan, 1973).
Fagan, R.F., and J.N.D. Harrison, *The Stage Coach: A Journey through Tasmania* (Hobart: Law Society of Tasmania, 1964).
Forbes, Cameron, *Australia on Horseback: The Story of the Horse and the Making of a Nation* (Sydney: Macmillan, 2014).
Giblin, R.W., *The Early History of Tasmania: The Penal Settlement Era 1804-1828* Edited by J. D. A. Collier, vol. 2., (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1939).
Harlow, Vincent Todd, *The Founding of the Second British Empire, 1763-1793, Vol 1* (London: Longmans, Green, 1952).
Hartwell, R.M., *The Economic Development of Van Diemen's Land : 1820-1850* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1954).
Haygarth, Nic, *A History of the Northern Midlands* (The Northern Midlands Council, 2013).
Higham, Louise, *Samuel Page of Tasmania* (LINC Tasmania: unpublished, 2010).
Howe, Renate, 'Fraser, Alexander (1802–1888)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1972).
Hubbard, Graham, Delyth Samuel, Simon Heap and Graeme Cocks, *The First XI: Winning Organisations in Australia* (Milton, Qld: John Wiley & Sons, 2002).
Hughes, Jonathan, *The Vital Few: American Economic Progress and its Protagonists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).
James, P.C., 'Gellibrand, Joseph Tice (1792–1837)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1966).
Jepsen, Stanley, *The Coach Horse* (Cranbury, New Jersey: A.S. Barnes & Co, 1977).
Jolowicz, J.A., and T. Ellis Lewis, *Winfield on Tort* (London: Sweet & Maxwell, 1967).
Kennedy, Malcolm J., *Hauling the Loads: A History of Australia's Working Horses and Bullocks* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1992).
Kern, Stephen, *The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983).
Lee, Robert S., *Transport : An Australian History* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2010).
Levy, M.C.I., *Governor George Arthur: A Colonial Benevolent Despot* (Melbourne: Georgian House, 1953).
Lewis, Hubert C., 'Lewis, Richard (1789–1867)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1967).
Loone, A.W., *Tasmania's North-East : A Comprehensive History of North-Eastern Tasmania and Its People* (Launceston: The Examiner, 1928).
Mantle, Nanette, *Horse and Rider in Australian Legend* (Carlton, Victoria: Miegunyah Press, 2004).
Margerison, Charles, and Dick McCann, *Team Management Systems, an Overview* (Toowong, Qld: 1990).
McGuire, Paul, *Inns of Australia* (Melbourne: Heinemann, 1952).
McManus, T., *Thanks to Providence* (Launceston: Regal Press, 1993).
Moore, James F.H., *The Convicts of Van Diemen's Land* (Hobart: Cat & Fiddle Press, 1976).
Moore-Robinson, J. and Tasmanian Government Tourist Bureau, *Historical Brevities of Tasmania* (Hobart: Government printer, 1937).

Morgan, Sharon, *Land Settlement in Early Tasmania : Creating an Antipodean England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
Morris-Nunn, Miranda, C.B. Tassell, Australian Heritage Commission, and Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (Launceston Tas.), *Launceston's Industrial Heritage : A Survey* (Launceston: 1982).
Mountfield, David, *Stage and Mail Coaches* (Oxford: Shire Publications Ltd, 2003).
National Museum of Australia, *Spirited: Australia's Horse Story* (Canberra: National Museum of Australia Press, 2014).
Newitt, Lyn, Alan Jones and Tasmanian Department of Main Roads Historical Committee, *Convicts & Carriageways: Tasmanian Road Development until 1880* (Hobart: Department of Main Roads, Tasmania, 1988).
Newman, Terry, *Becoming Tasmania : Renaming Van Diemen's Land* (Hobart: Parliament of Tasmania, 2005).
Page, C.A.S., 'Page, Samuel (1810–1878)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1967).
Perry, D.G., *A Social and Economic History Notebook 1750-1960* (London: John Murray, 1965).
Petrow, Stefan, and Alison Alexander, *Growing with Strength : A History of the Hobart City Council 1846-2000* (Hobart: Hobart City Council, 2008).
Prewer, Warren, *A History of the Hobart to Launceston Coach Services 1832-1876* (Unpublished: 2004). http://members.iinet.net.au/-pgaunt/history.html
Reynolds, John, *Launceston: History of an Australian City* (South Melbourne: Macmillan, 1969).
Richardson, John I., *A History of Australian Travel and Tourism* (Melbourne: Hospitality Press, 1999).
Roberts, Glyn, *Metal Mining in Tasmania 1804 to 1914 : How Government Helped Shape the Mining Industry* (Launceston, Tas.: Bokprint Pty. Ltd. in conjunction with Fullers Bookshop, 2007).
———. *The Role of Government in the Development of the Tasmanian Metal Mining Industry: 1803-1883* (Hobart: Centre for Tasmanian Historical Studies, 1999).
Robson, L.L. *A History of Tasmania. Volume I, Van Diemen's Land from the Earliest Times to 1855* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1983).
———. *A History of Tasmania. Volume II, Colony and State from 1856 to the 1980s* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1991).
Rutherford, Joan, *A History of Cobb & Co 1853-1955* (Unpublished: State Library of NSW, Mitchell Library, 1959?).
Schivelbusch, Wolfgang, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).
Selway, N.C., *The Regency Road: The Coaching Prints of James Pollard* (London: Faber and Faber, 1957).
Sierp, Allan, *Colonial Life in Tasmania : Fifty Years of Photography, 1855-1905* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1976).
Sinclair, Wynifred, and Elizabeth Christensen, *Thomas Burbury 1809-1870: A Pioneer of Van Diemen's Land* (Melbourne: Wm Caulfield & Sons, 1979).
Smithers, A.J., *Honourable Conquests : An Account of the Enduring Work of the Royal Engineers Throughout the Empire* (London: Leo Cooper, 1991).
Stancombe, George Hawley, 'Austin, James (1776–1831)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1966).
———. 'Cox, John Edward (1791-1837)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1966).

———. *Highway in Van Diemen's Land* (Glendessary, Western Junction, Tas.: G. Hawley Stancombe, 1968).
Symonds, Alfred Radford, *The Holy Bible Arranged in Chronological and Historical Order and Harmonised...* (Madras: 1848).
Thompson, E.P., *The Making of the English Working Class* (Ringwood, Victoria, Australia: Penguin, 1968).
Thompson, John, *A Road in Van Diemen's Land : The Story of Convict-Built "Bell's Line of Road" from the Derwent River to St Peter's Pass, 1820-1824* (Hobart: Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources, 2004).
Thrupp, George Athelstane, *The History of Coaches* (London: Kerby & Endean, 1877).
van Dulken, Stephen, *British Patents of Invention, 1617-1977: A Guide for Researchers* (London: The British Library, 1999).
von Stieglitz, K.R., *A History of Oatlands and Jericho* (Launceston: Telegraph Printery, 1960).
Ward, Russel, *The Australian Legend* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1966).
Waterhouse, Richard, *Private Pleasures, Public Leisure: A History of Australian Popular Culture since 1788* (Melbourne: Longman Australia, 1995).
———. *The Vision Splendid: a social and cultural History of rural Australia* (Fremantle: Curtin University Books, 2005).
White, Richard, *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity 1688-1980* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1981).
Wilkinson, Frederick, *Royal Mail Coaches: An Illustrated History* (Stroud: Tempus Publishing Limited, 2007).
Wilson, A.N., *The Victorians* (London: Hutchinson, 2002).
Young, Maxine, *George Page 1772-1865: A Pioneer of the Southern Midlands* (Hobart, 2010).

Theses

Austen, Brian, *British Mail-Coach Services, 1784-1850*, PhD thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, (New York: Garland, 1986).
Rootes, Grant, *A Chaotic State of Affairs?: The Permissive System of Local Government in Rural Tasmania 1840-1907*, PhD thesis, School of History and Classics, University of Tasmania, 2008.
Walker, Marian, *Memories, Dreams and Inventions: The Evolution of Tasmania's Tourism Image, 1803-1939*, PhD thesis, School of History, University of Tasmania, 2008.

Articles

Atkinson, Alan, 'Women Publicans in 1838', *Push from the Bush*, 8 (December 1980), pp. 88-106.
Bolger, P.F., 'The Changing Role of a City: Hobart', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, vol 16 no 1 (July 1968), pp. 6-17.
Carter, Judith and Don Bradmore, 'English Novelist Anna Maria Wight: tracing her connection to a remarkable Tasmanian family', *Tasmanian Ancestry* (June 2015), pp. 35-43.
Castles, Alex C., 'The Vandemonian Spirit and the Law', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings,* vol 38 (1991), pp. 105-08.
Chartres, J.A., 'The Capital's Provincial Eyes: London's Inns in the Early Eighteenth Century', *The London Journal*, vol 3 no 1 (May 1977), pp. 29-33.

Dickinson, G.C., 'Stage-Coach Services in the West Riding of Yorkshire between 1830 and 1840', *The Journal of Transport History*, vol 4 no 1 (May 1959), pp. 1-12.

Green, K.A., 'Lieutenant-Governor Arthur and the Establishment of the Post Office', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, vol 12 no 1 (October 1964), pp. 25-31.

Laidlaw, Zoë, 'Breaking Britannia's Bounds? Law, Settlers, and Space in Britain's Imperial Historiography, *The Historical Journal*, vol 55 no 3 (3 August 2012), pp. 807-30.

MacFie, Peter, 'Coachbuilding and Related Crafts in Tasmania' *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, vol 43 no 2 (1996), pp. 77-88.

Mead, Isabella, 'Settlement of the Norfolk Islanders at Norfolk Plains', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, vol 12 no 2 (1964), pp. 56-68.

Petrow, Stefan, 'After Arthur: Policing in Van Diemen's Land 1837-46', *Policing the Lucky Country*, Chap 14, edited by Mike Enders and Benoît Dupont, (Annandale, N.S.W.: Federation Press, 2001), pp. 176-98.

———. 'Leisure for the Toilers: The Hobart Working Men's Club 1864-1887', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, vol 49 no 2 (2002), pp. 71-87.

Squires, G., 'Benjamin Hyrons: Shoemaker, Convict, Storekeeper, Innkeeper and Stage Coach Proprietor', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, vol 24 (1977), pp. 66-76.

Thompson, F.M.L., 'Nineteenth-Century Horse Sense', *The Economic History Review*, vol 29 no 1 (1976), pp. 60-81.

Waterhouse, Richard, 'Cultural Transmissions', *Cultural History in Australia*, Chap 8, edited by Richard White and Hsu-Ming Teo, (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2003), pp. 113-126.

Websites

Australian National University, National Centre of Biography, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. http://adb/anu/edu/biography/.

Founders & Survivors. http://www.foundersandsurvivors.org.

LINC Tasmania Online. http://www.linc.tas.gov.au

National Library of Australia, *Trove*. http://www.trove.nla.gov.au.

Archives & Collections

Bath Postal Museum.
British Library, London.
British Museum, London.
British Postal Museum and Archive, London.
Burbury Family Archive, Stephanie Burbury, Jericho, Tasmania.
Heritage Tasmania, Hobart.
National Library of Australia, Canberra.
Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston.
Royal Society, Morris Miller Library, University of Tasmania, Hobart.
Science Museum, London.
State Library of NSW - Dixson Library, Mitchell Library, Crowther Collection.
Tasmanian Archives and Heritage Office, Hobart.
Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart.